THE RELIGIOUS SENSE

IN ITS

SCIENTIFIC ASPECT

THREE LECTURES GIVEN BEFORE STUDENTS OF THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON, JUNE, 1902

THE RELIGIOUS SENSE IN ITS SCIENTIFIC ASPECT

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To be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it, this is the golden rule.—MILTON.

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We have still one request left. We have at least reflected and taken pains in order to render our propositions not only true, but of easy and familiar access to men's minds, however wonderfully prepossessed and limited. Yet it is but just that we should obtain this favour from mankind (especially in so great a restoration of learning and the sciences), that whosoever may be desirous of forming any determination upon an opinion of this our work either from his own perceptions, or the crowd of authorities, or the forms of demonstrations, he will not expect to be able to do so in a cursory manner, and whilst attending to other matters; but in order to have a thorough knowledge of the subject, will himself by degrees attempt the course which we describe and maintain; will be accustomed to the subtilty of things which is manifested by experience; and will correct the depraved and deeply rooted habits of his mind by a seasonable and as it were just hesitation: and then finally (if he will) use his judgment when he has begun to be master of himself.—BACON'S *Novum Organum* (concluding paragraph to Preface).

TO MY FATHER

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SYNOPSIS

LECTURE I

THE RELIGION OF SERVICE

All thought that is not confined to bread-winning is philosophy. If, to acquire wisdom, we labour in the fields of knowledge, we are serving ideals that transcend the claims of utilitarianism. But knowledge is not wisdom.

(1) This desire for understanding is but seeking simplification of the complex. Simplification consists in classification of facts and phenomena and their relegation to law. All philosophers and scientists are driven to their work by the old question, "What is Truth?" The child seeking education in his infantile questions, and the philosopher teaching his wisdom, are united in their desire for simplification of phenomena and classification of facts. The relation of poetry to science.

(2) The brotherhood of all life. The law of Heraclitus is now substantiated, and expresses in idea the law of evolution. All that life owns is through inheritance.

(3) Like all other human attributes, the religious sense is an inheritance from mighty small beginnings,

else is man a special creation: a theory we cannot study biology and hold. Like other faculties, such as love and reason, it may be passive or active; its possessor may be unconscious of it or conscious. The religious sense prevails throughout creation, evolving, like everything else, from small beginnings to high on-goings. The religious sense not separable in idea from the ethical sense. The religious or ethical sense may be defined as the passive or active acceptation of the Law's demands of service that transcends the immediate needs of individual or community. The relation of the social to the religious sense is not one of identity, but of evolution. The relation of each of these to personal obligation is also one of evolution.

(4) Classification of the proposed lectures. The first deals with the story of the simplest social life, that of the sponge, and shows how each individual in the community serves self, the community and the unknown Law in which it has being: thus it deals with the Religion of Service. The second deals with the manifestation of the Law in the renunciation of self-interest, and shows how the beautiful comprises obedience to Law, and thus reveals the truth of the religious sense. The third lecture discusses the Religion of Freedom, and shows how, through Man's emancipation from the chains of the Law, he attains greater power to fulfil the Law, although through this same freedom comes his possibility of degradation.

(5) The properties of the primordial protoplasm in relation to physical forces. It holds all the essential properties of life—growth, procreation, death. The lowly forms of life prove that structure is not responsible for function, but rather that function designs structure. It is the idea of form and function that is

transmitted; and upon the strength of this inheritance amœba and man build their structure. The shell-forms of the organless foraminifera.

(6) The structure of the spongilla fluviatilis—a colony of individual workers, each intent upon the service of self, the service of the community, and the service of the Law, whose purposes transcend these humbler functions. The sponge's moat and walls, its citadel and streets, its masons and sweepers. The individual's life consists in each being intent upon its work: and its work is divine so far as it thrives in obedience to the Law of its cause.

(7) The elemental beginnings of the religious sense no more necessitate self-consciousness than do the beginnings of reason or other human attributes. Yet we ourselves can no more dissociate the religious sense from self-consciousness than we can altogether separate the faculty of seeing from thought concerning objects seen. But the elements of consciousness must have been present in the primordial protoplasm, else man could not have been evolved from it. Anthropomorphism. But, if the sponge-sarcode possesses all the elemental properties of man, must we accord it a soul? We do not belittle the oak-tree because of its beginning in the acorn; nor is man's soul the less because its possibility lay dimly in a particle of primordial protoplasm. The difference between the protoplasmic mason and man is this, that man's soul is in part free, and thus responsible to the Law for his labour, while the sponge-sarcode's is wholly captive to the Law, and thrives in a passive obedience.

LECTURE II

THE RELIGION OF RENUNCIATION

(1) FURTHER consideration as to the reality of the religious sense, which, it may be objected, must be conscious and voluntary in its exercise. Yet the eye of a fish is the same organ as the eye of a man, though mere passivity is the mental counterpart of the former, and imagination the ideal equivalent of the other. Objections of theology and pure science met. The religious sense implies bondage between life and the unknown: it is ethical because it implies obligation. While the bondage is most manifest in lowly forms of life, the ethical obligation is most susceptible of demonstration in man because of his freedom. There are three standpoints in the evolution of the religious sense as a vital equivalent: (i) Egoism; (ii) Altruism; (iii) Transcendentalism; and each leads up to and merges into that above it in imperceptible steps of gradation.

(2) In this lecture it will be shown (*a*) that obedience to the Law manifests itself in terms of beauty, and (*b*) that renunciation of self-service is definitely proclaimed as essential in the sense of religion. The theory offered is the old one of the poet that Beauty is Truth, is the revelation of the Law. Thus will it be found that Religion and Beauty are inseparable, and that the ethical is not far removed from the æsthetic. Why Beauty is not always manifest in things that live in obedience.

(3) Story of the Daisy. Renunciation is no mere fancy woven in the complex fabric of our environment,

but pervades all Nature. We find illustration of this fact in two communities of flowers: (*a*) the daisy; (*b*) the wild guelder-rose. In the former certain individuals have relinquished some privileges further to serve; in the latter we find more complete renunciation of the privilege of work in fulfilling the Law's needs. The daisy's work in handing onwards the torch of life in its own special form, and how it comes to shine in beauty. The function of beauty. As the daisy declares in beauty the ethical equivalent of its being, so does all right living shine in colour and symmetry. Duty lies at the very root of life, and is not an instrument for saving souls. The relation of the daisy's renunciation to utility and the social sense.

(4) Story of the wild guelder-rose. Its beauty due to those sentinel members of its loosely tied community which have relinquished all work. How, then, do they manifest the truth and serve the Law in their beauty? The ideality of beauty implies a wider range of reality than is comprehended in our systems, for Beauty proclaims its utility in revealing the depths of light. Yet to *feel* something of beauty is a better gift than to prove beauty to be the expression of the Law.

(5) The relation of utility to ethics and æsthetics. Two questions must be answered: (i) one from the scientists, and (ii) one from the idealists. The former claim that the flowers' beauty is but utilitarian, and is accomplished through the insects' selection and crossing of the most favoured specimens. They also assert that morality is but the law of social advantage. And they challenge contradiction. The idealist, on the contrary, asks whether the ideal of beauty and morals is not degraded by arguments which seek to prove

that both are primarily utilitarian, even if, at the same time, they are held to transcend mundane needs.

(6) The scientist's utilitarianism is only to be answered by showing the limitations of his facts, and how even he cannot escape asking questions which his facts fail to explain: otherwise he falls back on the term accident, which, as the antithesis to Law, should be the rankest of heresies to the law-seeker. Yet must it be conceded that both morals and beauty are utilitarian, though the extent of their service cannot be measured.

(7) The flower, says the idealist, is beautiful only because it transcends its obligation to its species and the needs of insect-conveyers of pollen, while the very essence of virtue lies in its disinterestedness. In answer this objector is asked to conceive of a system of morality or of beauty that shall be devoid of utilitarian intent. Virtue is not the less pure that it inevitably brings its reward, nor beauty less true that it is a revelation of the Law.

(8) Last word on the Religion of Renunciation. There is no hardship or cruelty in Nature so long as renunciation is in favour of the Law's intent. Even in the survival of the strong and falling away of the weak there is no cruelty, provided the Law is served in its high intent.

LECTURE III

THE RELIGION OF FREEDOM

(1) FINAL words on the Reality of the Religious Sense. The two objections to it—(*a*) that, because many do not possess it, the sense is not real, and (*b*) that it is merely an artificial product of an artificial environment. (*a*) If the former be just, there is no further argument, because we are not agreed as to our data. But the sense is a vital force in all who do not oppose the Law in vice, luxury, or cynicism. Instances in proof of this claim. (*b*) The second objection is too foolish to need answer to the scientific, who understand the meaning and influence of environment, which, never generating anything, is but the soil, good or bad, in which things are able to assert their vitality.

(2) Yet the religious sense appears to have degenerated in man, whereas it should, *prima facie*, give extended manifestation with his increase of attainment. The disaster has befallen man because of the lack of inspiration in his work, and because his sense of need in and obligation to the Law has waned.

(3) Is not this, then, failure on the part of the Law which should give us inspiration? The question expresses the whole difficulty of those who could believe in God but for sin and suffering. It must be answered fearlessly and truthfully, or faith is not possible. The Law needs for its higher work labourers that are freed of their chains. If they be still chained, like sponge and guelder-rose, no higher evolution in individual, society, or work were possible. Because of man's freedom comes the possibility of wrong-doing.

The story of the Bee, to whom virtue and vice are alike impossible.

(4) The Fable of the Chess-players who carved their own men. The story of the evolution of Sin and the advent of the Perfect Man, who sacrificed all for the Will of His Master.

(5) Freedom the final outcome of our growth in the religious sense. Thus is the religious sense inseparable from political advance, if both seek Freedom. Follows a historical clue to the study of our religion and our democracy. Stephen Langton; Simon de Montfort; the days of the Tudors; the Revolution; the Royal Society as cradle of the newborn freedom in Science. All movement in progress has come because some have been strong enough to justify their faith in ideals that transcend advantage. Martin Luther.

(6) The principles of protestantism are those of freedom, and are inseparable from those of democracy. In speaking of *principles* one does not imply theological dogmas or political codes, but the power which begins and continues any movement. Individualism forms the basis of Christianity, the spirit of protestantism, and the aim of democracy. All these are opposed to clericalism and socialism.

(7) Last words to show that the idea of Freedom is in no sense inimical to that of obligation or of obedience. The vulgar idea of Freedom reduced to its logical absurdity. The whole conception of Freedom is opportunity to grow. Freedom is distinct from licence, power from tyranny, charity from self-interested altruism, and egoism from self-seeking. The growth of Freedom is the freeing of Power. Neither can stand save in obedience to their inherent prospective intent.

The Religion of Service

I

THE RELIGION OF SERVICE

It is not my intention to discuss the academic philosophies, although you may suppose that a subject such as the religious sense calls for some recognition of the work done by great thinkers. I even disclaim any deep study of many writers who have sought to elucidate the mystery surrounding our life in its relation to the mighty Cause. And yet I claim fellowship with all the philosophers, just as everyone who, wondering at his own power as contrasted with its limits, or regarding the eternal in relation to man's brief

opening of eye upon its revelations, knows that it is his duty, if he would justify his soul, to ask great questions. For herein, you will perceive, Man is exalted into a dignity far transcending his supposed right to get the utmost satisfaction out of his life. Many of us are driven to face the world with an enquiry that probes deeper than its surface-pile of custom and respectability. We find that to live in true manliness we must labour in the fields of human nature, and accept all things, sweet or sour, of hope or despair, as our food. We are compelled, I say, to accept as necessary to us conditions and ideas that, according to the mere political economist or utilitarian, do not concern our welfare. In other words, we must admit that obligations urge all of us who seek wisdom to recognise and overcome difficulties that, for our so-called peace of mind, were better

ignored, and, so far as our worldly success is concerned, had best be set aside.

I shall, then, speak to you about things that we admit have no practical bearing upon the necessities of life,—as these are counted by some who hold the object of work to be the making of money and the buying of ease. In our leanings to deep thought, and in our hard study to understand that which is beyond the facts of our daily labour, we tacitly, though most potently, proclaim our obligation to justify the soul of man in its high endeavours. If we strive, as the great ones of the earth have ever striven, to better society and fertilise man's higher impulses, we are but admitting that transcendental ideals, however little we are able to define their import, are strong within us. We admit that all great thought in the world is inspired by such ideal forces,

even though many seek to belittle their influence upon us. The fact that vague intuitions of grand possibilities are ever stronger in moving individual and society to noble action than the grim facts of daily necessities is in itself strong evidence that the origin of such ideals lies in a world or atmosphere of eternal truth. And we, whether we are but weary men and women or are hope-inspired poets; whether we are seeking light by acquiring knowledge or are hidden from the sun in the mines of commerce; one and all of us are more deeply concerned in our relation to that which we must admit to be unknown than in our worship of success and intellect we can understand.

I confess, though I would make all men philosophers, that I do not attach much value to the study of systems of philosophy.

Nevertheless, we may well believe the wisdom of the ancients to be of higher worth than the mere scientific knowledge of our own day: wisdom is more than knowledge because it necessarily deals with the transcendental and ethical rather than with mundane facts and necessities. The systems of philosophy are of historic and academic interest rather than of practical importance: they are the dead languages of great minds, although they lived and bore fruit in virtue of that same eternal spirit of enquiry which, I say, must be stirring in some measure even yourselves and myself, or we should not be here assembled. But in this day our method of intellectual labour is changed, chiefly because the materials offered to us for such labour are so greatly increased. Nevertheless, as the dead languages, which we now study because of their scientific

and academic interest rather than for their utility, once lived in virtue of the same human needs that still make language necessary, so the old systems of philosophy dealt with the same eternal questions that still beset us in changing form, but with unchanging spirit. And if we accept our new fields for cultivation and our new ploughs for upturning their soil in the spirit of a humble farmer who, though striving with Nature, yet waits upon her ministrations, we shall, I believe, discover that the eternal truths are ever revealing themselves.

Though knowledge is not wisdom, and science, because of its limitations, is not truth, every new fact that is acquired must be accepted as a gem holding fit and essential place in the eternal cosmos. We are often tempted to reject facts if they contradict our cherished

traditions ; but, if we are real students and not mere searchers for philosophers' stones, we shall accept everything that is given us because holding in its heart some measure of revelation. No jewelled insect shining for a day, no mammoth buried for a small eternity, no new example of the dependence of life upon physical forces, can do other than increase our determination to find new food for our deeper learning. If, moreover, we accept the facts offered us by the men of science in a spirit more reverential than is sometimes evinced by their philosophic effronteries, we shall, I believe, gain more for our religion, if it is sincere, than we can at present imagine.

I seek in these lectures to tell you the true nature of what is commonly understood by the term *the religious sense.* Before I have done you will believe that this sense

is as real as any other of our senses or emotions, as real as any of our intellectual faculties. And please observe this at the outset: I shall not help you to accredit this religious sense by belittling it, but by exalting it, although we shall perhaps best grasp its reality by searching for and finding its elemental beginnings. But we have to clear some ground, whether because it lies fallow or gives life to that which cumbers it, before we can go straight forward in our husbandry.

In this lecture I am going to show you in the first place (i) that all understanding depends upon simplification, and that the simplification of phenomena consists in relegating them to the law responsible for them; and in the second (ii) that the law of life is pervaded by a marvellous uniformity of method and purpose, which becomes more

apparent as we acquire knowledge, and that this law enfolds all creation in a mighty brotherhood or sharing of inheritance. Next, (iii) in affirming that the religious sense exists germinally in all forms of life, I shall define it. Then, (iv) after giving you a classification of my lectures, I shall proceed (v) to tell you of certain primordial forms of life, and (vi) to show you how we find indisputable evidence of an embryonic religious sense in such lowly forms of animal life as the sponge. Lastly, (vii) I shall show you how we may define the difference between a sponge and Man, especially in relation to this religious sense.

(i). All thought that transcends the daily toil has, I take it, but one object in view—*viz.* to understand; and this desire for understanding will always resolve itself into a simplification of things that appear complex.

To put it in more ordinary terms, everyone who asks a question dealing with the abstract seeks an expression or definition of some law that will explain the phenomenon exciting the enquiry. Even the child who first looks upon an opening daisy sees in it a revelation of some hitherto unsuspected wonder, and seeks to find its parallel among his small experiences. Tell such child that the daisy unfolds its bud because it cannot help it, and he may be silenced; but he is not enlightened by a stupid formulation of a fact that was sufficiently obvious. Tell him, on the other hand, as a wise mother would, that the flower blows because God wished it to do so, and he immediately finds himself confronted with an ethical law which he understands because it is the same bond which connects parental authority and his own actions; his budding

desire for understanding is satisfied because of this simplification of his facts. And I maintain that such a reply to a child is truly scientific in spirit, although the reverential mother, in so speaking, is altogether ignorant of the evolution of the flower or of botanical classification. To tell a child that a flower buds because it cannot do otherwise is an infamous snub to his small philosophic heart; to tell him that God made him and the flower that they should both do His will and justify Him in making them, points out to the child the great truth that there is uniformity in law between him and the daisy, and that they own a common parentage in that power which, in its integral embrace of the universe, we are justified in calling divine.

Concerning this uniformity of Nature I shall have much to say as we proceed. At

the moment I am content to suggest to you that the instinct of the child is always one of brotherhood towards each new experience of life as it rushes into his eager mind. He kisses the flowers, runs after the birds with outstretched arms to embrace them, hugs the kitten in tender fellowship. All things are part of his life, and the more of them he possesses in fine intelligence and loving fellowship, the bigger grows his life. To me such phenomena are but the instinctive knowledge of natural truth that abounds in the simple-minded, but which the philosopher ignores, partly because he forgets many worthy things, partly because he is overwhelmed with minor knowledge. And in the child's questionings we perceive indications of what we call the scientific spirit. For, having collected his facts, he seeks to classify and simplify them by a law

that shall prove common to all of them. Such innate sense of the scientific is indeed the basis of all mental action: as soon as we select, from the ever unwinding concatenation of facts presented to our mind, individual items that possess a common cause or contribute to a similar effect, we have mental action as distinct from mere automatism; and we simplify. The indolent watching of events, however intent the consciousness may be, does not constitute thought: mental action lies in the scientific understanding of the relation of events to one another, however distant they may seem to be; and this association arises from an innate desire for simplification. Thus I am justified in affirming that a germinal scientific spirit is evinced by the child asking questions about a daisy because he would assign it a place of fellowship alongside of his own budding self. And

I shall presently show you that the religious sense is even more definitely germinal in all forms of life.

In the same desire for simplification of phenomena, the philosopher has ever sought a law that should explain all things: and not the less so that his systems are complicated and his conclusions hard to understand. The question throughout all time has ever been that of Pilate, "What is Truth?" Every philosopher has asked that question as the reason for his work, knowing that, when he found the answer, all laws and systems, all conflicts of right and wrong, would stand revealed in an indisputable simplicity. And to-day we in our fuller knowledge still ask, What is Truth? though we seek but the simplification of facts. The simplification of all chemical processes lies in Dalton's atomic theory; the wonders of

the heavens are all harmonized in the laws of Newton and the theories of La Place; the history of evolution is comprised in the hypotheses of Lamark, Darwin, and Weissmann; and so on. The desire of the scientific man is the desire of the philosopher; but the latter is more passionately desirous of understanding Man and the law that accounts for, governs, and frees him, while the scientist, his desires not reaching beyond his immediate environment of facts, finds content in the acknowledgment of his limitations.

And in this place I am anxious, for reasons that will before long become apparent, to show that there is yet another class of man who, in his own way also, is deeply desirous—perhaps even more so than either philosopher or scientist—to ask in widest wisdom the question, What is Truth? and who will

accept only such approaches to answer as make for simplification. I refer to the poet.

I might engage much of your time—and not unprofitably, I think—in proving to you the importance—indeed, the necessity—of your understanding the true place of the poet in our education, whether as individuals or race. For his methods of expressing thought are the methods of every man, woman, and child; of every race, cultured or aboriginal; of pope or penitent, prince or pauper. All language is based upon the system of metaphorical expression. Our growth in mind is but increasing victory in expression. Our language, whether in its proverbs, its idioms, or its words, is a system of representing abstract ideas in concrete metaphor. This is Nature's law of speech and thought: the poets have made language. Upon some

other occasion I may have the privilege of showing you that humbler creatures than ourselves, from whom we descend and inherit all the potentialities of life, present and to come, also have obeyed a law of symbolic expression. Nothing grows save in virtue of the principles of its beginning. You will see, if you give this a little thought, that I am stretching no point in thus extolling the position of the poet. He teaches us expression; and without the means of expression, I take it, there is little means of learning.

I claim that the use of metaphor is the natural way of teaching and learning; consequently, although I am now essaying to instruct you in matters of science, which has no dealings save with fact, and in matters of philosophy, wherein we must be wary lest the symbol be mistaken for

the life itself, or the material for the vital power that materializes,—consequently, I say, I shall make frequent use of my natural right: I shall use metaphor, and even fable, if need be, so long as I am careful that neither I nor you mistake illustration of an idea for evidence of fact, nor similarity of appearance for analogy of nature. Indeed, I maintain that Shakespeare succeeds in educating us where Kant, for instance, fails. I hold that Burns has seen deeper into some laws of Nature than Plato. I believe that the poet, like the child, often feels, and hence in some measure understands, that uniformity of Nature in simplicity of law which is withheld alike from the experience and intelligence of the philosopher. And why? Simply because poet and child, being simple offspring of Nature, use her own method of expression, and learn

something of wisdom in spite of the lack of scientific precision in their observations and of logic in their deductions.

The scientific man considers himself the antithesis of the irrational poet, and thinks that the poetical method is inconsistent with the purpose of science. The poet, on the other hand, often holds the scientist in fear because he misunderstands the need of crude fact. What I would impress upon you is this, that the poetical method can never be unscientific, for it is itself a natural law. If language is a natural development, poetry is the outcome of Law; and that savant who maintained that any one of Nature's processes was irrational would surely be proclaimed as unscientific or demented! Fancy a Darwin questioning the reasonableness of the law of evolution! or an astronomer who would dare reconstruct the

planetary system on a better basis! And no more than these can the philosopher discard the ingenuities of language when it seeks to represent abstract thought in terms of metaphor. Perhaps if the philosophers had used more fully the language of daily life, they would have succeeded better, and have illuminated what they often set down in shadow; they would have done for thought what Shakespeare has done for sympathy, and made the understanding of wisdom the birthright of every man. And now let me proceed.

(ii). The more surely science leads us to the simplification of facts, the more surely we become impressed by the uniformity of Law. To make this apparent to those unversed in natural science would occupy more time than is at our disposal, and I must beg these to take my words on trust. What

I would have everyone realize, scientific or unlearned, is the fact, which, I say, the simple child appears to realize, of the brotherhood of all life in its essential conditions. It is this fact that the biologist has been so intent upon demonstrating all through the past century; it is a fact which every new discovery in the buried histories of past geological ages emphasizes ever more strongly. Briefly we may state that all life has evolved from lowly beginnings to increasingly high on-goings, and that the brotherhood of life is such in virtue of a parentage in the ineffable unknown, however humble or exalted the myriad species may be in the great animal or vegetable kingdoms.

Though there be multitudinous variations and modifications in these laws, as they adapt themselves to changing environment and increase of purpose, the fundamental laws

remain unchanged. If we please, we may define Life as the manifestation of its idea in fact by the constant in-taking for use, and casting out when done with, of matter, during which process physical laws are let loose or controlled. In such definition we say what is true of every form of life. All the laws of physiology, the laws of birth and work, of generation and death, are summed up in this definition, and apply to all the subjects of both animal and vegetable kingdoms. We are all offspring of one parent, and share in a common heritage.

The old Law of Heraclitus, that nothing lives but in virtue of its becoming otherwise in growth and change, is absolutely substantiated as the great law of Nature; and in the realms of metaphysics it has a significance deeper than we can fathom. We must grow or decay, live or die. And

the corollary of this law is that nothing exists but in virtue of that which has gone before and brought it. All we possess is in virtue of inheritance. All that we do is in virtue of the possibility in us for doing, which possibility we inherit from our ancestry. And our ancestry, although incapable of carrying into effect many of the possibilities lying dormant within it, yet was able—nay, was impelled—to hand on a possibility of wider growth: a potentiality that could not be realized until the individual inheritors and transmitters of the Law had grown capable of revealing it. And this Law rules that the race must ultimately fulfil its destiny.

This statement, I think you will find, contains the gist of the theory of heredity, though it is dogmatic and expressed in terms of teleology. I want you to grasp the idea

for all it is worth, as it holds in it much of that simplification which I seek. As the oak has evolved from the acorn because of the dormant possibilities lying in the germ, and although such possibilities exist only in idea or function and not in actual structure; and as that germ is valueless, in spite of its buried miracle, without the ministration of suitable soil, rain, sun, and wind; so have we exalted animals been evolved from some mighty primordial germ virile in virtue of a possible destiny. Nothing we achieve, nothing we feel, nothing we know, but the possibility of its ultimate fructification lay hid or partly revealed in the patient, half-sleeping hearts of our countless ancestry. And this is what I mean by the uniformity of life, by the simplicity of the vital law.

Is, then, such simplicity too vast in its embrace for our acceptance? Not to the

true scientist: for he is ever confronted with the great fact that the primordial germ contained in it all the possibilities of the myriad changes that led upwards to man's creation. To the true scientist, I say, it cannot be too vast, even though he, knowing how we possess nothing save in virtue of our inheritance, is compelled to ask, in spite of his cherished agnosticism, the question of questions, Whence this primordial inheritance? Of those among you who are students of science I would beg that you would carry about with you this question, and not cast it from you because you can find to it no answer in fact. Of those of you whose chosen work in the world is to study the nature of the divine, and teach your suffering fellows how to draw from the infinite wells of life that which will quench their thirst, I would beg that you

look into the revelations of Nature, no less than into the revelations of Scripture, and find that there is no antagonism in Truth. In the simplification of Law lies the encouragement of Faith.

Nothing in us men, I say, exists save in virtue of our inheritance. We hold from our parentage high estates that we must ever enlarge. We hold, as certainly, debts, and with them, thank God! an obligation to liquidate them. Our power of love, our freedom of will, our selfishness, our cruelties, our enthralment to the demands of that very law of life in whose service we are enlisted—all are ours, for good or evil, in virtue of our inheritance.

How, then, will you biologists exclaim, shall we find love and freedom of will in an amœba, a sponge, a coral; in fish, reptiles, birds and beasts of the field? Yes, I say,

we should so find them could we analyze the *vis vitæ* which is mighty even in these in virtue of the hidden potential power: yes, I say, when, given the germ of the acorn, we can analyze and discover in it the necessity of producing the oak-tree. For if you biologists repudiate the suggestion that the highest human passions and virtues lay dormant in our ancestry, if you cannot admit that here and there upon the vast ladder of ascent our own excellences and depravities may be dimly indicated in our humble progenitors, then you must allow the only alternative: that man, in his essential being, differs from his parentage. But in such claim you advocate the theory of special creation—a term which is rightly repugnant to the evolutionist, seeing that all the wealth of his labour denies any process of creation except that of growth.

All is Law, inexorable, definite, unchanging Law; and the law of life is inheritance, whether it manifest itself as love or free-will, as growth in obedience or blossoming in freedom. And we students, humbly worshipping at the shrine of Truth, must accept all the words that fall from her mouth, whether they condemn our little systems and theories, or whether they inspire us with new life to pursue our journey and understand her behests. Our purpose in study is to obey and understand, to love truth rather than any specious mockery of comprehension.

You will, by this time, not be surprised if I affirm that the religious sense is no new acquirement, but has been dormant throughout our evolution, and is awakened to a very passion in the life of some saints. But I shall do more than this: I shall, I trust, convince you that we have actual

evidence of the presence of the religious idea, in many manifestations, throughout the world of life. For my purpose is to show you that, as structure and function augment in the evolving forms of life, so do they give us increasing evidence of the relation of each individual to the eternal law of which it is a manifestation. Each and all, humble or exalted, serve, in varying degree of simplicity and success, the Idea, or the Law, in virtue of which they exist, although in the same service they must pursue their individual duties. But this declaration of my purpose does not quite comprise what we signify by the religious sense. And I must be more definite, although it will scarcely be possible for you to grasp the full significance of a definition until the argument is completed.

I take it that every mental and emotional

attribute may exist in a passive and active state. Whether it be one or the other depends upon the degree of consciousness and freedom of action of the individual. In the transition of the passive to the active is found the evolution or growth of such attribute. Let me be more explicit. Memory is more finely developed in some of the lower animals than in man, and many of the weakest intellects among ourselves possess phenomenally fine memories. But in the less highly developed minds the faculty of memory is purely passive or mechanical or involuntary: a page of history, for instance, is read to a feeble-minded child, who afterwards will repeat it accurately, but will not be able to answer a single question concerning its matter. Memory partakes of the active quality only when it is wedded to intellect by the high-priest of our will.

So with our reasoning faculty. The insects evince a form of intelligence that has so much the appearance of mind that their students and lovers declare them to be second only in reasoning power to human beings. But their brain-work is mechanical, passive, involuntary; their actions are impelled by circumstances from whose compulsion there is no appeal. There is no evidence of choice or will-power. Of this I shall speak at greater length in my third lecture.

Again, the emotion of love in almost all its aspects is met with in the humbler grades of life-evolution, and I suspect that, if we knew all, we should find no form of life without some measure of this attribute, which philosophers have ever associated so intimately with life and creative power. But in the humbler forms of life, whether human or standing

lower, love is also purely passive, and under the compulsion of a law that is not perceived or understood ; while in the finer specimens of men and women, perhaps in most of them, love rises into an active personal equivalent, in which its possessors consciously, voluntarily, take part in the furtherance of the law by which they are, even if unconsciously, encouraged or impelled.

In all such faculties or properties the difference between man and his progenitors lies in his consciousness of the forces within him, in his power of studying them and understanding their origin and import, and even more in his power of choosing which of his inherited instincts—the lower or the higher—he will co-operate with.

It is my purpose, I say, to show that the religious sense prevails throughout creation,

although it varies extraordinarily, not only in the multitude of species but in man also, in its clearness of manifestation. I want to insist upon the point that this sense of religion has evolved by slow processes of gradation, as all other animal attributes, whether structural or functional, have evolved. I want to show that the religious sense, no less than our bones, has evolved from prehistoric beginnings, just as our power of will and our faculty of renouncing rights and desires are but the blossoming, if not yet the fructification, of forces that have lain dormant in the living acorn of time.

(iii). And now for our definition. The religious sense, whether passive or active, is that acknowledgment of the Law which compels all creatures possessing the sense to work or live for objects or attainments, be they

immediate or prospective, in which the individual has no personal concern, save perhaps in exalted specimens of the species Man. I would beg you to note this definition, for unless we hold its essential points we shall often be at variance and shall need to reiterate its claims. The definition insists that this sense, which I call religious, plays a great, if not the chief, part in the evolution of life, and is fundamental in the development of man's obligation to live in conformity with the Law and in the winning of his freedom.

You will perceive that I have deliberately excluded from this definition any suggestion of the religious sense being identical with the social sense. This latter is quite as real and nigh as powerful as the former; nor is it easy to understand where lies the line of demarcation between them.

Nevertheless, the social sense operates mainly, if not solely, in the material interest of the individuals, even if collectively; while the religious sense recognizes the relation of life to the unknown Law which would appear to embrace purposes, perhaps immediate, perhaps only prospective, of which its slaves see nothing and imagine but a little. Although the social sense may prove a stepping-stone, or phase, in the evolution of the religious sense, it is not the same thing: for the social sense is utilitarian, the religious is ideal; the social is altruistic, the religious is transcendental. The social is scientific—*i.e.* deals in measurable and cognizable facts; the religious is intangible. The religious deals with old, yet ever abiding, philosophic wisdom rather than with the new knowledge which we find so necessary in our ephemeral labours.

A psychologist may, if he please, define the religious sense as a refined outcome of the social law that proclaims charity to be meritorious only in proportion to the advantage accruing to society. If this psychologist can justify his attempt to belittle our untutored sense of the ideal, I am silenced. Yet to me the Law which inspires this sense must be greater than man whom it has produced; and I fail to see that we come any nearer its understanding by attempts to prove it less than the ideal of its creature. Both social and religious senses indeed partake of the ethical; but notwithstanding this common holding of the two, the one, I say, is of self because limited by utilitarian guarantees, while the other is of the eternal Law. And the eternal Law is known and measured in the passion which some few evince to serve it even at the cost of all that

makes life worth having in a mundane sense.

Although I maintain that the social and religious senses are not identical, I believe that they both manifest themselves through the operation of the same principle in life, which impels the individual on the one hand to good citizenship, and on the other to a prophet's or martyr's death. That they are not the same St. Paul was careful to teach; that they are not the same our science shall show us. They are no more the same than the budding, blossoming, and fructification of the vine are the same, though each such aspect of life stands in virtue of the same impelling growth. And my purpose is to show you that, in studying the simpler manifestations of a law, we may arrive at a truer understanding of its fuller developments. Therefore, although I again affirm

that the social sense is not identical with—nay, that in some respects it may appear inimical to—the religious sense, yet the understanding of the one will, by natural process, lead to an understanding of the other. Unless, once more, we admit special creation, we must know that all life lives by growing, and that, the greater the wonder of its complexity, the stronger must the evidence become that even man lives only in evolution.

(iv). I must now give you a brief suggestion as to the headings of my subject, for I think it will help you to understand the simpler arguments if, at the very beginning, you have some hint of the method of thought by which they will lead you.

In this my first lecture I am going to tell you the story of a very simple form of life—that of the sponge. In it I shall show you a city built by living things, each of which,

while building the wonderful structure and sustaining its own needs, shares the life of its neighbours, whether near or distant. I shall further show how each individual is inspired by the desire to attain that upon which the community is intent, although immediately and personally unconcerned in its fulfilment. Thus shall I argue that the earliest indications of a germinal religion in service are revealed to us.

In my second lecture I shall show you where we may find early evidence of religion in renunciation. It is manifested alike in the humblest of animal forms and the most perfect of flowers, and in its expression of truth it shines in beauty. I shall seek to make clear to you how life is gifted not only with a purpose beyond the understanding of its servants, but is intent upon the manifestation, in outward and

visible sign, of the truth of its inspiration to live in accord with transcendental idea.

In my third lecture I shall advance more evidence for allowing the religious sense to rank as a psychical fact in man, and that as clearly distinguished from the instinct of social obligation. We shall make enquiry into the relation of the religious sense to social claims. We shall, in studying insect communities, realize how their perfect subservience to their laws is accounted for by an automatic and restricted religious sense closely akin to social law. I shall show, further, how, in man's emancipation from the chains that, like the laws of the bees, bound his forgotten ancestry to a passive obedience necessarily precluding the possibility of sin, he has attained freedom and power; and how at the same time, and as a condition of his freedom, he has

acquired the faculty of working in opposition to the law of his being.

(v). Now I am going to be very elementary in my description of the humblest forms of life, because I would have you understand that their vitality, no less than the vitality of the most complex forms, depends upon the idea in which they exist rather than upon their structure and form. This sounds ominously like plunging into a philosophic abstraction at the very moment I am offering you simple concrete facts; but a few of these facts will show you at once that even their simplicity involves a philosophic explanation. And if we realize how idea rules form, builds and vivifies structure, we shall the more easily understand that power over us and all life which our religious sense of transcendental obligation proclaims.

You have all heard or read of, and some of you have been very near handling and directly studying, that particle of elemental protoplasm which is called an amœba. This is, in idea and in fact, almost the simplest conceivable manifestation of life. It is an elemental cell in which we can define the difference between life and lifeless matter, yet in words that shall embrace all creation. The properties of matter you know, as distinguished from life, are best expressed in terms of their physical attributes, such as gravity, electricity, light, heat, etc. None of these forces can escape the law of their interchange in mathematically measurable equivalents; none can be destroyed or created, and no matter can escape their domination.

On the other hand, the essential of protoplasmic life appears to be a power of holding in check the physical forces that

destroy it as soon as its life departs and leaves it mere matter. And herein we may say lies the secret of life: it has power over all those forces and elements that we can measure in our laboratories and define in our text-books with absolute precision. More than this, as every biologist must admit, each individual element, whether simple as an amœba or complex as a man, is not only holding in check chemical forces that will destroy such element as soon as its vitality wanes or departs, but it is actually at warfare with other forms of life that can destroy it no less surely than physical forces. And when either amœba or man dies, the material forms which each had built, inhabited and controlled are assailed by myriad life-forms, be they bacteria or worms, which prey upon the abandoned garments of life.

The essential conditions of life, then, being strife with physical forces and opposing life-forms, we find that any item of life excels so long as its purpose is fulfilled in the work it does. And growth is the outcome of such work and warfare. Moreover, in an individual's recognition, passive or active, of the Law's hidden purpose lies the religious sense. In the failure to obey this triune law of warfare, work, and growth, whether we study the moral nature of man or the lowest forms of life or the intermediate means of man's evolution, we observe the overcoming of the higher by the lower. It is the law of Nature that he who will not work must rot; that he who will not strive will be enslaved; that he who will not seek increase shall impersonate the horror of degeneration.

But to return to the amœba: it consists

solely in a particle—the size is of no importance—of protoplasm. It has no discoverable structure, no organs, no senses. Its shape is always changing, and in its changes it effects movement, whether for progression in the water it inhabits or for seizing morsels of food. From any point of its changing surface it can thrust forth a couple of lips to catch a floating particle. The lips close and form a temporary mouth. This mouth next becomes a stomach that so operates upon the food that it separates what it needs from what it does not. It digests the former and discards the latter from any point on its surface. And you will perceive from this description that the amœba's needs adapt its form for their fulfilment: its functions are not dependent upon special structures, as is mostly the case with more highly organised creatures.

But, besides this amœba, there are multitudes of different kinds of simple particles of protoplasm each having different needs, according to the different work each one is predestined to perform; and it is by the work done, and not by the structure, that we know and classify some of them. Each, moreover, reproduces its kind with its own functions, and never with the functions of another kind, although in appearance, chemical composition, and mode of life the two kinds may appear identical. And herein we find the essential element in these lowly forms of life as well as in the mighty of the earth: each item of life is what it is in virtue of its function, although to declare this truth is to declare that life is what it is in virtue of an abstract idea to which it owes its existence.

I am deeply anxious that you should understand the importance of this *function*, upon which depends, I say, the nature and work of any living object, rather than upon the structure produced by it for the sake of fulfilling such function; therefore I will give you further illustration of what I mean. We might examine the roots of, say, a growing spike of wheat and a bean-shoot in the same soil. Each rootlet is terminated by living protoplasmic cells, structureless and identical, that of the bean with that of the wheat. Yet each differs in this extraordinary although obviously essential fact: that the minute servant-cells of the wheat select from the soil flint for the strengthening of the straw, while the bean's gleaners of its food reject the flint as unnecessary. And I maintain that these particles of protoplasm are virile in their function in virtue of the ideal needs of the

plant which they serve, and which has produced them: they are what they are, not in virtue of their composition, but in virtue of the work they are able to do—that is, in virtue of the idea in which they are thrust forth into the soil to seek food for their masters.

And in like manner do all particles of protoplasm, whether they live alone or in communities, labour variously, not in virtue of their structure, but because of their parental inheritance of an idea in purpose, of a function in attainment. Look at the *Foraminifera*—those multitudinous shell-forms encasing microscopical particles of structureless protoplasm that compose the deep Atlantic mud, and have built up the chalk cliffs and limestones—each and all have definite work, and are true to their inheritance of the idea or form of shell they must

PLATE I.

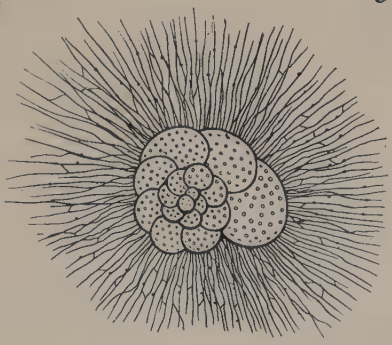
a

b

c

d

e



f

[SPECIMENS OF FORAMINIFERA

a, amphistegina Lessoni; *b*, cornuspira foliacea; *c*, lagena vulgaris; *d*, rotalia Beccarii; *e*, lagena sulcata; *f*, Discorbina. *c* and *f* represent live specimens with their pseudopodia projecting—in the latter from the minute orifices with which the shell is perforated, in the former from a large opening

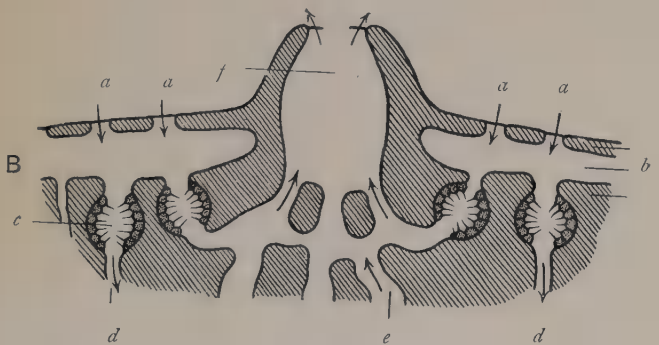
produce. The function of each is to extract the carbonate of lime dissolved in the sea, and excrete it as a chalky covering identical in shape to that of its parents. We have here a diagram (Plate I.) showing some of these pretty forms, which are among the commonest and most beautiful of the microscope's objects. You will note that the form of some, *e.g.*, the *discorbina*, is identical with that of the nautilus (Plate VI.) or an ammonite, which rank as far above the *Foraminifera* as man ranks above these exquisite molluscs. Many of them have minute pores, through which their possessors thrust attenuated and extemporised portions of their bodies to seize upon and absorb the food they need. Others keep open one end of their encasing armour for the same purpose; and although their little bodies are all the same inside, and they all labour in making an

armour of the same chemical composition, yet they inherit, as part of this function or idea of work, a function and idea of form.

Now I am going to say more about this diversity of work as we may observe it in other structureless particles of protoplasm, which labour together in furtherance of one ultimate object. They live in communities and work in co-operation, but specialize the various kinds of labour necessary for the erection of a very wonderful and ordinary structure—the sponge.

And in this, as in every study of life, we take a simple form. Only in understanding the simple can we hope to grasp the significance of the complex: only thus can we hope to grasp the relation of the abstract idea or principle to its concrete manifestation.

PLATE II.

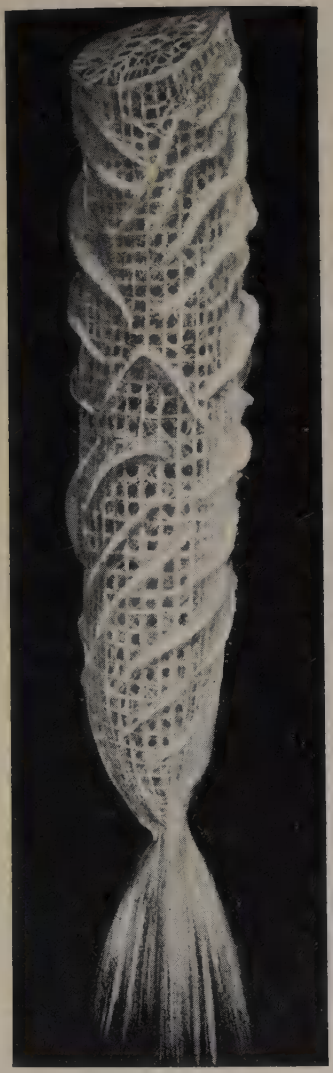


A, Spongilla fluviatilis, enlarged, showing crater-like apertures. *a*, the same, natural size. B, Diagram (after Huxley) of the spongilla's waterways and ciliated chambers. *a*, *a*, openings in outer wall; *b*, moat; *c*, chambers lined with ciliated cells; *d*, egress from the chambers; *e*, outgoing canals leading into *f*, the crater-like orifice

(vi). The simplest form of the sponge for our present study is a fresh-water specimen known as *Spongilla fluviatilis* (Plate II.). It is animal, and not vegetable as was formerly supposed. It is found in green masses on the walls and banks of docks, canals, rivers, or on long-immersed twigs and floating timber. It has, like most though not all sponges, a skeleton formed partly of horny substance and partly of flinty needles. It is the skeleton of sponges remaining after the community is dead, by which we know its species. In different kinds the forms of skeleton are wonderfully unlike one another; but the mode of life varies little in spite of difference in destiny and parentage. For one instance, we have the common domestic sponge—a dead city built by the living, its walls and portals formed of an elastic substance of wonderful tenacity and softness. Another is a specimen

called Venus's flower-basket or *Euplectella* (Plate III.), while a third, very different again, is known as Glass-rope. Most of the sponges are fixed as soon as their childhood is past; and some (*clionæ*), attaching themselves to the shells of molluscs, bore holes through the walls of their unwilling hosts. But, whatever their form or mode of life, each kind of sponge is a colony of innumerable individuals working together towards a common object, in which they are unconsciously concerned: not all doing the same work, but specializing in mutual service in order that the purpose in the life of each and all may be the better attained.

The spongilla, then, consists of skeleton and a live substance which may be spoken of as the sponge-flesh. It is this that we must study. It consists of multitudinous cells, each of which possesses a certain



VENUS'S
FLOWER-BASKET
(*Euplectella aspergillum*)

amount of individuality, although sharing with its myriad brethren in a common purpose. We have here (Plate II.) a diagram of the city built by these little bodies, which we will call briefly the sponge-sarcodes. We find an outside wall composed of these living creatures, each of which is indistinguishable, in simplicity of function and absence of structure, from an amœba. They are arranged in close order and contact, each spending its life in building, strengthening and enlarging the solid substance upon which it sits; and, curious as it must seem to us whose great desire in our work is to be quit of it, the masonry and its masons never part during life. In this outer wall or bulwark are many openings, which, in some kinds of sponge without skeletons, open and close as need requires. These openings lead into a great moat surrounding the

citadel. To the moat finds access, through the gates in the outer wall, the water in which are carried the food and building-supplies necessary to the city's work. However great may be the rush of water outside, within this great moat or harbour all is comparatively still. The particles of food—or trading vessels, shall I call them?—are gently carried into the deep waterways of the interior. But how are they carried inwards? In the ramparts of the citadel itself, which form the inner confines of the moat, are likewise many openings, through which currents of water, with the building material they carry, are kept moving, so that all the deep streets and alleys, caverns and cellars, have their share of good things. All the walls are crowded with these living sarcodes, within and without. And here and there, especially in the passages leading

directly inwards from the moat, are found little chambers, through which each ingoing stream passes. These I would have you particularly note: they are lined also with the sponge-sarcodes, though here these differ from the mason-cells in one respect. Each has thrust from its free surface a long lash or cilia, as it is called, which sweeps the water always in one direction. Thus, together with its fellows, it forms a broom-like lining to the chamber, each bristle being alive and intent upon its special duty of sweeping inwards, in co-operation with its neighbours, supplies to the workers within. Thus rivers are kept flowing inwards from the still harbour, bearing in their waters the food.

And the sweeping members of the community take from the water all they need, and pass it onwards, still rich in supply,

to their mates, busy upon other tasks within.

In the depths of the sponge the little streams of water give up what the sponge needs, and take in exchange manufactures that, though refuse from the sponge's point of view, are highly prized by all the individuals and cities of the vegetable kingdom. These products are carbonic acid and nitrogen compounds similar to those we use in our gardens as manure; and without these by-products of the animal, as you know, the vegetables could not live, just as, unless these last threw off the oxygen from the carbonic acid which they seize upon for its carbon, the animals would die. And from the sponge's deep recesses and streets the little streams are gathered together again into one large channel, which ultimately, like a great covered canal, carries the waters

through the outer ramparts, moat, and bulwarks into the flowing water of the unknown river.

And this is the plan upon which all sponge-cities work, however varied the style of architecture, or however different the materials used. In all of them the citizens are living and intent upon their particular duties. Some supply the food, some build ; and others rest while awaiting their time of service to the law in its needs of their offspring. And the builders labour differently according to the needs of the whole city. Thus some in the spongilla manufacture horny stuff ; and some make the flinty needles where stronger support is needed. In the common sponge no flinty or chalky skeleton is made except at the points where its attachment needs greater strength of frame. Then the architecture varies more with the

sponge's parentage than does that of us men with our social class. Some of us live in palaces, some in pigstyes; yet we are all men, and capable of living in either, though we judge one another by the mere accident of social rank. But in the sponge-sarcode there is no interchange of style or rank, and the spongilla could not build a Venus's basket. Each sponge is formed in obedience to the absolutely rigid law of its form: from which law there is no departure, although the law may perhaps, from time to time, change the demand it makes upon its servants.

Now I must beg of you to note carefully in your minds a very obvious fact, and refrain from discounting the depth of its significance because of its superficial obviousness. It is this: each of these sponge-sarcodes is intent upon its function.

Indeed, all life depends upon the fact of its being intent, of its intending something, whether conscious of the fact or not. Life in perfection is perfection in work; and work is divine so far as it thrives in obedience to the law of its inspiration: though its office is now in service of self, now in service of society, now in worship of a transcendental ideal. The little sponge-sarcode's intent is various. First it has its own needs to supply, for without doing so it could not fulfil its further service. Secondly, some show a definite function of service to their fellows: I refer to the sweepers. And thirdly, some, while feeding themselves, and serving themselves and their neighbours by building walls or firmly cementing their foundations to the rock, further fulfil the amazing function of building a city of an unconsidered yet determinate style of architecture, and for the

fulfilling of an unknown purpose. Finally, each and all are necessary to the subsistence of a kingdom of which they have never heard, although this kingdom is also absolutely necessary to them. And each and all of these many functions are performed in obedience, unconscious and involuntary, to the great unknown Law.

Now, as soon as we realize the fact that this obedience in service to the Law is accountable for the little sponge-sarcode's life and function, we find ourselves face to face with the lowliest indications of religious sense —*the sense of obligation to obey*, though the injunctions be those of service to others no less than to self; though they enjoin recognition of some idea or law in which even the community is but remotely concerned, yet which idea or law enwraps the vast kingdoms of animal and vegetable in a common need

of mutual service. Here, unless I much mistake you, I have given you something to think about; and I do not believe, if you allow your imaginations free play (and the imagination is the mother of thought and knowledge), you will ever reach the bottom of the well from which I have set you drawing water. If I enabled you to reach a definite conclusion as to the relation of manifested life to the law that has produced it, with the object of summing up the whole mystery in a definition, I should be insulting your intellects in an attempt to confine infinity within the bounds of finite definitiveness. "Le Dieu defini est le dieu fini," exclaimed the mystic in repudiation of dogmatic theology; and we, rightly regarding every obscurity as fresh field for the acquisition of knowledge, shall ever find that each new fact we gain will give

us further insight into the deeps of the unknown. Our search is for knowledge of the living truth: not for incrusting definitions, which may be helpful weapons in the warfare with ignorance, but which often make harder the acquisition of wisdom.

(vii). Our insight into the life of the sponge-city, with its countless millions of inhabitants, brings us to many questions that are inseparable from my main purpose in addressing you; and some of these I shall have to discuss, more especially those which present difficulties or which appear to oppose the trend of my argument. At the moment I shall but seek to answer one question that has probably arisen in your minds already, or that would, I trust, do so when you came to weigh my words hereafter. You will ask me whether the very basis of such an expression as the *religious sense* is not an admission

of consciousness and responsibility; and, further, whether these properties are not inseparable from self-consciousness and individuality. Now I am glad to think that you put such question to me, because it is absolutely just, and because there is only one answer to give you—namely, one of affirmation. But such an answer does not imply objection to my claim that we find indications of the religious sense throughout creation, and so definitely suggested in the sponge-sarcodes. Yet I must immediately justify this answer in some measure, though the argument will run through the other lectures; or, if I cannot yet justify it, I will set you to asking the question in terms so much larger than you had thought necessary that you will go away with a bigger hope in your hearts of finding an answer that shall be more than a phrase or a

definition, more even than a text-book or a creed.

You may think that I am assuming too much in suggesting individuality to these sponge-sarcodes—that practically I am attributing to them consciousness and what we may call, for lack of more definite words, the possession of a soul; and I admit the claim, if you will remember that I do *not* believe in special creation, and that I *do* believe that the evolution of mighty things from small beginnings has come about precisely in virtue of the possibility, dormant yet germinal within them, to do so. This is a big conception; and we cannot get away from its reality, whatever our line of study or bent of mind. Be we scientists or theologians, materialists or idealists, this heroic fact—of evolution in virtue of prospective possibility—remains. And all of

us must ask, Whence this possibility? Whence the original germ of our evolution? Each of us must admit that the answer is hid from us in the mystery of the unknown Law. Some will be content to ask no further, will be content to admit that we cannot tell, will be content to sleep again and call our sleep the philosophic enjoyment of life. But others, I think, will live their lives passionately discontent with any semblance of intellectual ease, and will pursue the question of questions from point to point, knowing that science alone will not serve—that true living and pure thoughts, the trust of ideals and the relinquishment of self-service, can alone bring us nearer to that wisdom and peace which lie beyond all knowledge and science and philosophy. All thought, like all great deeds in the world's history, has arisen from discontent with present

limitations—from a passion to further the spirit of growth in betterment. This spirit is the birthright of every man, woman, and child, because it is the essential condition of that life which has ever been evolving towards some unknown destiny in obedience to its parental law.

Even the religious sense, even man's soul itself, has been evolved from primordial beginnings: and the virtue of the tree is the same as the virtue of the budding cotyledons. If we can more simply know what life means by studying the first signs of life in the germinating seed, we may likewise learn something of the nature of the religious sense and the soul possessing it by watching it as it buds in the sponge.

Such as will now accuse me of anthropomorphism in finding the rudiments of ethical

law in a sponge, I will pray to offer me other means of investigation than the anthropomorphic. We can judge of the nature of God only by the human intellect's judgment of the nature of man and belief in what he might be: we can judge of the nature of a sponge-sarcode only by our knowledge of life in ourselves, and by perception of the fact that life is the same in its essential attributes throughout all creation. The only differences are those of degree. Indeed, recent scientific work all tends to justify this anthropomorphism. Weissmann's investigation of the laws of genesis and death are studied in the very humblest forms of life; while the researches of Galton on the inheritance of genius have found their scientific exposition in the experiments of Mendel in the production of variation in peas. Moreover, the converse

is equally true. Buffon argued that "to understand what had taken place in the past, or what will happen in the future, we have but to observe what is going on in the present." This dictum, upon which modern geology is based, is in all probability an equally true guide to the laws that have necessitated our life in its evolution.

In the study of life, as appears to me, we must either be anthropomorphic or fall back upon the first chapter of Genesis as a relation of scientific facts. To find the same laws of heredity and variation in the races of peas and the races of men; to find the same laws of feeding, working, resting; the same laws of parentage and bringing forth; the same laws of desiring life for unknown purposes—of compulsory dying in the midst of good things we seem to understand;—to find these same laws, I

say, throughout all life should bid us pause before we scoff at finding that the intent of service to fellow and obedience to unknown law in the sponges is germinal of the social and religious sense in man. Our life in its mortality may truly be but an adumbration of that full shining of the eternal life which, because we possess a measure of it, we are able to imagine in its beauty: yet is this our shadowed life brilliant in contrast with the lightless life of the citizens of the sponge. Correspondingly, seeing that our own religious sense is accounted for only by an instinctive belief in a possible perfection, the reality of which is not weakened by the fact that few or no men have attained it, I see no reason why we should deny a humble form of life, not differing in essence from our own, the rudiments of a religious sense. The fact that man has

gained some power of guiding his life by the light of the Law, while the sponge-individual obeys solely because it cannot do otherwise, is no argument against the same inspiration being accountable for both forms of life.

Shall we then dare to speak of the soul of a sponge-sarcode?

Yes, not only shall we dare, but, I think, we must so speak; for only upon the supposition that it possesses characteristics which we know to be essential in ourselves can we account for its performance of duty and obedience to the eternal law of its being. Only upon the supposition that its essential excellence is one with the mystic force that has brought ourselves into being and makes us labour can we have knowledge of the great unknown ocean: of that ocean in whose very bosom we lie, unconscious of its service to us as the spongilla of the

river, and thinking that, because this ocean that upholds us is unseen, it is beyond our immediate and personal welfare. Only so can we perceive our brotherhood with a sponge-sarcode, and understand that, though our excellence of work be higher, we share with it the power of inheritance and of bequeathing, the power of doing what we can, the power of obeying what we must.

And yet there is one great difference, though, I think, of degree rather than of kind: else we are created on a different plan from the great brotherhood with which we share the essence of life's law. And this difference is one which I shall have constant need of referring to: it is this—that the sponge-sarcode obeys because it must, and with neither understanding of the purpose in its life nor faculty of acting

contrarily to the law of its being. Thus are virtue and vice alike excluded from its social and personal existence.

On the other hand, man—though he too lives in virtue of an inheritance whose dictates he must obey, because his parents have ever, through the countless ages, obeyed them—has choice, in such directions as his faculties have led him to understand, of doing or refraining from doing, in furtherance of or in frustration of the essential Law of his and the sponge-sarcode's being. Of man's freedom I shall say more in my third lecture.

And when this admission of the distinction between man's soul and the sponge-sarcode's is realized, we find that man is so very different from his little brother that he is inclined to claim that the very fact of his riches as contrasted with his brother's poverty

implies a radical disparity. The difference is there, though it is one of degree rather than of kind. That our very will-power, like our anatomy and physiology, like our faculty of memory and power of love, has had beginnings so small that we cannot detect how or where it first became manifest, is no argument against the reality of its present strength and prospective dignity. No oak-tree is belittled when we realize that it grew to be what it is only because the riches of its fruitful strength lay dormant in the cheap acorn's heart.

Yes, each individual sponge-sarcode has a soul if we have a soul; and every bird, beast, and fish—nay, every loathly reptile and insect, every parasite, every cannibal, even when cultured as only the parasites and cannibals of our modern society can be—has a soul: which soul consists in its possession

of a sense of the essential Law that has brought it into being. But, again, there is a difference. Man's soul is his own, and is thus personal; and he, having attained self-consciousness and freedom to think and to do, has become accountable to the Law and to his fellow men for his upright living and growing. But the sponge-sarcode's little soul, full of work and obedience, is different from man's in this, that it is not its own, is not personal, is not accountable for its life or its works. Man's soul is in part his own; the sarcode's soul is only God's.

I have now given you enough to think about for one lecture, and I beg you to give the facts I have put before you some deep and honest labour; for in my next lecture I shall have more to tell you about the revelations of this mighty Law in whose

motherhood we live, and in the realization of whose right to demand our service and reverence we perceive the development of the religious sense. I shall hope that, when we are looking upon the religion of renunciation and the mystery of beauty, you will bear in mind the life-story of the sponge and its religion of service. For my argument will never go far from it.

The Religion of Renunciation

II

THE RELIGION OF RENUNCIATION

We are so habitually induced in our struggle with mundane matters to set aside our aspirations, that our minds are not at every moment in fit condition for the higher thinking. The hope and fulfilment of life ultimately depend upon our hunger. Yet, though learning is as necessary to the soul of man as fat is a necessity in his diet, neither body nor mind lie under obligation to grow corpulent. By no means the least of the barriers we erect between ourselves and wisdom is intellectual surfeit, or, as Bacon calls it, "exuberance of knowledge."

Overfeeding results in slackened zeal as surely as perennial hunger starves hope. Many of us are suffering from one or other of these disadvantages, and all weary at times with contending for the needful. We cannot at every moment find our minds and hearts at their best for deep thinking. As the things we are now dealing with demand, I think, the best that is in us, untrammelled either by surfeits of learning that prejudice or by a sickly starvation that rejects good food, we must be sure that we are attuned to our subject, so that no discords break into the order of our work. Consequently, before proceeding to the immediate subject of this lecture, I will recount the more important conclusions arrived at in the first.

(i). My first lecture dealt with the obedience of all life to a Law transcending the

immediate needs of individuals, or families of individuals; and we found, in the unconscious recognition of obligation to the unknown, some elemental suggestion of the religious sense. If it were objected that this sense cannot be considered as such because it is purely involuntary and unconscious, then I claimed that not one of our specially human faculties have had elemental origin. Consider for a moment an illustration of what I mean. The eye of a codfish is fundamentally the same organ as that of a great painter, and the sense of sight must be the same in both of them; but we do not argue, because the fish cannot see the glories which a Turner transfers to his canvas, that the faculty of seeing is not the same in both. We do not say that the human eye and its mental equivalent could not possibly have evolved from similar or even simpler beginnings.

Correspondingly, there is no reason why we should not study the earliest beginnings of a painter's power of vision, and of its intellectual counterpart, imaginative invention, in the simplest of fish. We may even be compelled to assume that an amœba or sponge-sarcode must also have the elements of seeing in its nature, though no part of its body has been specially reserved for this function, any more than definite structure has been elaborated for mouth or stomach. Similarly, the most exalted development of the religious sense may have taken beginning in such a simplicity of obedience to natural law that we are unwilling to apply to it the word *religious*.

Yet I find objections assailing me from two quarters. Those of you whose education or natural bent inclines you to accept scriptural revelation as the final appeal will

quarrel with me for discovering seed-like beginnings of divine grace in the grass of the field or in the wonders of the ocean. You will think that I am degrading the most exalted of our inheritances from God to mere attributes which all flesh and all herbs acquire without consciousness or aspirational effort. But for my part I do not think we belittle the "greatest among herbs" in showing that it has grown from a "mustard seed," nor its virtues by saying that, in their miraculous beginning, they took form only in a possibility of prospective attainment. And I believe, if any among you do object in this wise, you will ultimately admit that the facts I am offering you have enlarged your conception of the divine power that is in every man for justifying the method of his creation.

On the other hand, those among you

whose tastes and studies lie in the pursuit of knowledge, and who thus incline to refuse all food that is other than fact, you, who are students of science rather than of philosophy or theology, will wonder that I, a man presumably of scientific education, should be concerned to find, ranged throughout the wide scale of evolution, mental attributes which you consider to be the mere outcome of social expediency, or perhaps as but remnants of decaying superstition. But you scientists, too, are easily answered for if we may not suppose that the possibilities of all human faculties, good or bad, intellectual or emotional, exist in the lower forms of life from which you say we have evolved, then, by this failure to admit my claim, you are sanctioning the heresy (to you as great as that of the philosopher's stone) of *special creation.* You have but two

alternatives: if you admit special creation as even a part factor in the evolution of man, you must listen to the words of the Scriptures in explanation of many natural facts; if you repudiate a special creation, as I, for my part, think you are bound to do, you will be compelled, before I have finished my argument, to allow that it is not the less scientific that it discusses the religious sense as one of the mighty human attributes.

I suspect you scientific men will readily admit the argument drawn from the similarity of a fish's and a great painter's eyes, because you do not question the reality of the human faculty of seeing. But you will—perhaps quite fairly—think that I am taking for granted too readily the religious sense as a definite function or attribute of man; you may affirm that a major premise in my syllogism is at fault. I have already

touched upon this point; but just now, before we have more definite facts in hand —of which I have plenty to offer you—I shall refrain from speaking fully of this most important point in my argument until the opening of my third lecture. But although I may not yet have persuaded you that this religious sense takes vital part in our life, I may reiterate what I mean by it, and this in terms somewhat fuller than I have yet employed.

The sense I speak of is religious because it implies a union between life in all its forms and the Unknown. And it is more: it is *ethical* because it implies obligation, whether active or passive, conscious or unconscious, to the unknown origin of life's being.

The sense may not be the less real that its possessor is unconscious of its behests.

The sense of sight, I have just argued, is possessed alike by fish and man; but the codfish cannot be conscious of his gift, still less has any knowledge of obligation towards it or privilege in its possession, such as are possessed by a Titian or a Turner. So may a sense, such as that of obligation to the Law, be strong in its influence upon a citizen of the sponge-city, although the little structureless mass of protoplasm be utterly unconscious of its behests and impellings. As it is chained to the law of its being, so it obeys the law from an abiding sense of such obligation. As this religious sense becomes more definitely manifested, so it begins to partake of an ethical equivalent. I have shown you how in the lowest forms of life the individuals serve at once their own needs and the law which has need of them for purposes beyond their own welfare; and in higher

forms, long before consciousness of moral obligation is attained in man, we actually find willing, though perhaps still unconscious, sacrifice of personal interests and needs in the furtherance of the unknown Law's deep purposes. And in man I claim that there is even greater possibility of manifesting the Law in which all life lives, moves, and has its being; and that in virtue of his conscious power, of his faculty of choice, he throws in his lot either with the Law which has given him freedom or with his own personal desires and needs which chain and imprison him.

Thus there are three standpoints in the evolution of obligation as vital power—Egoism, Altruism, Transcendentalism. We find ourselves first recognizing the fact that all forms of life live in the pursuit of their personal needs, although none the less in

obedience to a law which has need of them, or it would not have produced them: this is *Egoism*, though expressed in terms of the transcendental. And we may take as the simplest examples of self-contained and self-sufficient life the beautiful *Foraminifera* of which I told you in my former lecture.

From the second standpoint we shall find ourselves admitting that the service of others is essential in all social communities —even when they are composed of such lowly individuals as the builders of the sponge. Here we find that *Altruism* (to use Comte's word) is as much a property of the humble as of the exalted, though it is made the basis of that philosopher's message of religion to those who can see no further than their eyes instruct them. But further, and still in examination of this second

standpoint, I shall indicate in this lecture that actual sacrifice of personal interest is found throughout life, although those who involuntarily give up their own at the instigation of the Law do not suffer in the process. This may still be no more than rigid, mundane altruism ; but it indubitably shares in the transcendental, and thereby becomes extra-mundane charity, as soon as it can be proved germinal of evolutionary fruitfulness.

Thus we reach our third standpoint of *Transcendentalism*, whence we survey this same force of religious obligation in man. But its aspect is now changed. For man, having acquired some understanding of the Law, experiences personal obligation to suffer if need be, that its high behests, rather than his own needs and delights, be satisfied. Man has become, in measure great or small, a conscious partaker in the mighty work

of the eternal, though its purposes are unknown to him; and, in this high responsibility and conscious sharing in the building of the eternal city, he attains freedom, even though the glories of the city are hidden from him, because, like the sponge-sarcodes, he is still chained to his labour. Man, I repeat, is unconsciously a labourer in the building of the city, whose architecture and needs to himself he understands scarcely better than the sponge-sarcode grasps the beauty of the Venus's flower-basket; yet man's city, transcendental though it must be to his present limited senses, may one day prove not less real than the city of the *Euplectella*.

(ii). So far went the endeavour of my first lecture, in which I but suggested how self-renunciation may be essential to the furtherance of the Law's ideal. In this one I am

going to show you (*a*) first in what manner this obedience to the all-embracing Law manifests itself in Beauty: in what manner, that is, all vital forms unconsciously—yes, still unconsciously, even in us men—recognize and declare the fact of this obedience; and (*b*) secondly, how definitely, not only service of the Law, but, more finely, renunciation of self-service, is proclaimed as essential in the sense of religion.

I must now give you the clue to the understanding of Beauty. It is a link between obedience in service and obedience in renunciation; for it is the mode of expression common to both.

When in my first lecture I showed you the deep influence of the Law upon lowly forms of life, I must have given you knowledge that many things are very beautiful which you had never suspected of beauty;

that forms of life which "the dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear" are no less exquisite than our garden flowers, which some—perhaps the rich who hold, and not the meek who inherit—think were created for their delight, rather than to fill their own place in God's universe. If I then gave you a little thought of the universality of Beauty, as well as a belief in the idea of service being essential in life, you will be in large measure prepared for that which I now shall say. I might have discussed Beauty when we last met quite as appropriately as now; and I might now quite fitly leave the subject till after my say on the religion of renunciation. But Beauty, as you shall presently understand, is the *light of the Law*; and we shall best consider its nature before proceeding further, because Beauty, being the outshining of both service and renunciation, will help

us to understand their relation to one another and to our life.

Philosophers have, I take it, since ever they began to think, discoursed upon the significance of Beauty. And, again without giving you the views of great thinkers, I am going to offer you a simplification of the law of Beauty that shall embrace its every aspect; and this although at present I intend going no further than an examination of the question in relation to the religious sense. And my theory is no new one: if I affirm Beauty to be the light of the Law, I am but substantiating the old saying of the poet that Beauty is Truth.

You will perceive that if in my former lecture I dealt with the earliest indications of the ethical, in this I deal with the indications of the æsthetic; and I shall show you how the æsthetic is but a manifestation and

recognition of the ethical. In other words, I shall make you understand that Beauty is the light of the Law because it is the revelation of the Law. Ethics is the study and understanding of our obligation to Law; æsthetics is the expression, the outward and visible manifestation, of this obedience. And we shall find that the further obligation reaches in any form of life beyond its own personal needs, and the more definitely it expresses such relation to the relatively transcendental, the more surely do we instinctively declare it to partake of the function of beauty. Please remember this assertion of mine, for I think you will admit, before I have ended my story, that I have justified it. The more definitely renunciation of personal rights enters into the individual's life, the more surely, *if such renunciation ranks as service to the Law,*

does the individual's personality shine in beauty.

To offer you, in connection with the subject I am essaying to instruct you upon, a theory of Beauty must appear somewhat irrelevant. But it is not so; and the further we proceed the more clearly will you understand that the idea of religion and that of beauty, if I am right in the explanation of its office, are inseparable from one another.

We have many expressions in our daily conversation, still more in our religious observances, that we cannot define the meaning of, although they are necessary to our mutual understanding. So common may they be that we casually imagine we know all about them, and have no need of a philosophical simplification of their import. Among such stand prominently forth the words *beauty* and *truth*. Thus we often refer, without

understanding precisely the significance of our words, to the *truth* of an *idea*, or of a *phenomenon*, or of an *intent*: and this although the person most likely to use such an expression is the very one to ask the question, "What is Truth?" The word *truth* has to him the significance of some deeper origin, purpose, or law than is evident to the casual observer; and in speaking of the *truth* of a matter or an idea he uses a phrase that declares alike his inability to understand and yet at the same time his belief in the deep origin, purpose, or law of that matter or idea.

So with Beauty. The person most ready to feel the influence of the beautiful, and to recognize it as a force working beneficently in those who have eyes to see it, is the very one to admit that he does not understand it. To one whose eyes and heart

seek truth in the ways of things, the beautiful awakens deep feelings that put him in some sort of subjective touch with a mighty, though hidden, intent; and this very fact makes him cry out against his own dimness of eye, and ask the question, "What is Beauty?"

Moreover, if the religious sense is the recognition of the individual's dependence upon the law that has need of him and demands service that shall extend in purpose beyond the personal and social life, we may say that religion is the recognition of the deeper truths of Nature. And if some deeds of life proclaim its service to an idea lying deeper than personal needs, the manifestation of such idea, taking form in the embodiment of service, is what we mean when we speak of Beauty. If Truth is the deep law of our being, Beauty is the manifestation of such law. If we labour for the truth, consciously

or unconsciously, we do so in virtue of our religious sense, be it conscious or unconscious. If service of the truth is pure and unadulterated, it produces that feeling or emotion in another which makes him know that he stands in the presence of a shining light which he calls Beauty.

So that Beauty is inseparable from the service of the Law, and the ethical is not far removed from the æsthetic. When, moreover, we see work which is the outcome of service, whether observed in sponge, flower, or man in his highest offices, we give expression to our feeling, ill understood though it may be, and say that *the thing is beautiful.*

Upon some other occasion I hope I may have opportunity of telling you more of the relation of Beauty to the truth, and how, as man gains clearer perception of the unfolding Law, and desires closer touch with its

truth, he seeks to proclaim his faith in new-invented forms of Beauty, and thus discovers Art. But for the present I must leave the subject, content in hoping that I have sown a little seed in your minds to grow and bear fruit. Yet there is one point which I must briefly refer to, because I seem to hear a question rising already among you. Why, you ask, is the beautiful not always manifest in those who obey the Law?

But is it not always so manifest? Not by any manner of means, you will say. You will look at this common sponge, and tell me that, if all I have said concerning its structure and function is true, it ought, according to my theory, to be as lovely as the Venus's flower-basket; whereas, casually looking at it, you cannot admit that even its unquestionable service to man justifies us in calling it beautiful. Nevertheless, as

soon as I have explained to you its system of work, and told you the truth of its law, and let you peep within its city walls, you involuntarily exclaim, forgetting your repudiation of my theory, "How beautiful!" And your instinct proves truer in its feeling as to the essential in Beauty than your intellect can understand. Instinctively, when you see how even an ugly bath-sponge is the result of life intent upon its law's fulfilment in obedience and service, you know what Beauty means; and indeed you come thereby a little nearer to knowing what Truth is.

Moreover, as soon as this service of the Law becomes more obviously manifest to our eyes in the spinning of glassy threads and the weaving of them into such exquisite vessels as this Venus's flower-basket, we wonder in a less doubting spirit. "Wonder,"

says Bacon, "is the seed of knowledge," and our perception of Beauty's wonder gives knowledge of the hidden deeps. And further, when we know that the protoplasmic folk who spin, though lacking wheels, and weave, though wanting looms, without intercommunication or moving from the place where each is chained—when, I say, we understand that each lays down his microscopical length of thread in the precise manner needed and designed by the idea of the whole, formulated by the will of the Law governing the life of each working cell, we are silent in deep worship of this eternal, ever revealing Law, in whose service we men and women are also enlisted. We hardly then dare exclaim, "How beautiful!" but fall silently on our knees as if in tacit prayer to the Unknown for some closer touch with its infinite life.

All life above the lowest, I strongly suspect, lives solely in virtue of service. No life truly lives save in work. If it seek to do otherwise, be it amœba, worm, or man, it dies or degenerates and becomes a parasite. All life is but a great brotherhood; and the laws of the parental roof, though it be as wide as the canopy of the heavens, are the same for all. There is no life possible but in service and work; and there is no good work or pure service possible save in the strength of an ever-growing intent. The life of the acorn is its power of growth; and the life of man is his power of increasing freedom in an ever-growing capacity for service in renunciation. It is this faculty of renunciation which must now engage our attention.

Once more I will show you how merit is not peculiar to man; how renunciation is

not merely the outcome of our social life or the invention of religious mystics and enthusiastic visionaries. And this time, to illustrate the obedience and beauty found in the faculty of renunciation, I pass from some humblest forms of animal life to some of the highest developments in the vegetable kingdom's evolution.

I am going to tell you about two flowers—the daisy and the wild guelder-rose; and, though perhaps some of you know more of their anatomy, their pedigrees, their physiology, and their place in botanical classification than I do, I shall tell you of a simple fact that has been always before your eyes, although you perhaps have never perceived it.

(iii). The daisy, although a lowly and common flower, takes a very exalted position in the evolution of the vegetable kingdom.

THE OXEYE DAISY

a, the complete flower-head; *b*, the outer pistillate floret, with ligulate corolla; *c*, the inner hermaphrodite floret, with tubular corolla; *d*, pistil; *e*, syngenesious anthers

(Plate IV.) You probably know that it is a community of many individuals, each of which takes its share in the work of the city it inhabits in obedience to some instinctive, innate need: which need is the life of each individual floret, and co-operatively comprises the life of the whole. Each of the individuals forming the yellow disk is perfect in function and structure, competent to perform all the offices which it is the glory of flowers to perform: each, that is to say, contains anthers and pistil, pollen and ova, and spends itself in transmitting the law of life throughout the ages that shall come. There is no specialization of function or purpose among those yellow florets; each lives the same life as its neighbour, striving in the same idea, living in work, and dying when its work is done. But the few outermost florets, those which

shine in the aureole of white rays, are quite different from, though formed upon the same plan as, their modest fellow citizens. The florets of the disk, I say, are independent and self-contained workers in procreation, simply fulfilling the Law; but the circumferential rays,—white with the purity of the noonday sun, tipped in the twilight red with which, in promise or solace, he suffuses the earth—these have relinquished in part their privileges, completeness, and independence. For their stamens and anthers, as you botanists know, have disappeared as such, and in their relinquishment of function have provided for the metamorphosis of the insignificant tube-like corolla into that beautiful white ray of light which extends the form and fairness of the flower beyond the bare needs of the community. But the white florets still retain their pistil and the function

of producing seed, although, in consequence of their serving the community's needs, they have become dependent on other individual florets, through the ministrations of insects, for the realization of their desires or possibilities. The white petals have ordered their lives foolishly, according to the laws of political economy; for, content in shining and serving, they wait upon ministration.

But how do the white petals serve their neighbours? In more ways than one: they protect them during the cold night and from rain in the day by folding over the sleeping or busy workers a tent-like canopy; while when the sun shines they fulfil the Law's intent by attracting insects that shall carry the pollen from flower to flower, and thus favour that cross-fertilization which is so advantageous to

every species in both animal and vegetable kingdoms.

Now I take it that the highest physiological privilege in animal or vegetable is one possessed by all forms of life, that of fulfilling the Law's needs beyond the personal life of the individual, and handing onwards to unborn creatures the wonderful torch of life. Each keeps the torch burning in his own person, and spends his energies in unconsciously tending it, and all that he may hand it onwards to those that shall come, undiminished in brilliance and, if possible, stronger in intensity of evolutional purpose. Yet some individuals there apparently must be who have other offices to perform, and who, though they relinquish this high privilege of their inheritance, who give up, perforce or by choice, their share in the increase of life that shall come, yet

"also serve who only stand and wait." Such are the white rays of the daisy. They stand around the homes of their breeding comrades, and fulfil a function which these have forgotten. What function? That of maintaining the relation with and dependence upon another kingdom of creation, from which they are widely separated in points of structure, although they stand related to one another in that most deep sympathy, *mutual dependence.* The insects of shining wing and the flowers of gay colours are thus mutually dependent, the butterflies and bees for their honey, the flowers for the exchange of pollen and the perpetuation of their species. And the outer florets of the daisy, unfurling their white flags, relinquish their individual perfection: they accept dependence upon others for fertilization solely that they may

add to the perfection of the whole, and give to it yet another function which, without such renunciation, the flower had not possessed.

What function? you again ask me. *The function of Beauty*: the function, that is, of declaring upon the face of its little citadel that the Law reigns supreme; that there is truth dwelling in its inmost parts; that its symmetry of form, its tender harmony of colour, its strong-rayed light, all point to a deep law of increase in service, which law proclaims the inspiration of its intent in manifest beauty. For the law of all laws in growth of life is this, that in serving we live; in relinquishing our narrower needs we grow; in receiving from others what we need in exchange for service rendered we attain the higher freedom; in fulfilling the Law our service shines in beauty. And note: this mutual serving is

the very antithesis of remorseless dependence and irreligious charity, which both favour parasitism; for I say it is the great law supreme in all evolution that by losing the life we find it; by giving, and thus creating the possibility of receiving, we extend the life beyond the confines of self, beyond even the domains of society, and win freedom for our growth.[1]

[1] It may be objected that the increasing excellence of form in the outer rays of the daisy is but the result of the specialization of sex, which I think we may believe to be the first step in securing that mutual dependence of individuals upon one another which is the beginning of social evolution. But the argument will be found faulty if we consider individual points in some of the *Compositæ*. The relinquishment of the staminate function never appears to be of direct advantage. In the daisy the outer florets appear to me often to escape fertilization altogether, while in the leopard's-bane, though the outer florets do invariably become fertilized, their seeds, unlike those of the hermaphrodites in the centre, bear no pappus, and are thus worse equipped for flying away from the crowded parental soil. Note also the fact that in the blue cornflower, the most beautiful of all wild composites in its contrast of inner and outer florets, the latter are

Look at it with open mind, you who have not thought deeply upon such things, who have not yet dared or desired to look for what must lie behind Nature's facts and lesser laws. Do not say that I am drawing pretty analogies with the licence that is accorded to the poet just because of his supposed irresponsibility! Believe me when I tell you of this brotherhood of all life in which we men and women, we daisies

neuters. This remarkable fact should be compared thoughtfully with the account of the wild guelder-rose in the following pages. I do not think I am straining my argument in suspecting that beauty is the natural outcome of relinquishing individual interest in the service of the community. Nor is this relinquishment the less disinterested even if it be an effort after that specialization of sex which ultimately proves so necessary in evolution, and thus profitable to individuals as well as to the species. I may add that there is very definite evidence in the vegetable kingdom of a strong tendency towards bisexualism, and that even among flowers that are hermaphrodite the effort to prevent self-fertilization and to encourage cross-breeding is strikingly obvious.

and sponges, hold our being. The law of life is the master-law which rules us all, animal and vegetable, and its essential conditions are the same for all who breathe in action; for all who wait in hope; for all who in accepting service, serve; for all flowers which are but momentary crystallizations, as it were, of the all-pervading life; for all human beings who are budding, as some may be, in freedom because of their wilful service of the Law. Believe me that if birth and growth, change and death, increase in progeny, ascent in excellence, are the properties of all life, the laws of ethics and æsthetics, the obedience to law and manifestation of this obedience, lie deep and essential in our very nature.

Morals and the laws of beauty are not as the small-minded philosophers would have us believe. Duty is more than an idea

evolved by the exigencies of society. Duty is not merely a quality of good citizenship; nor is it something contrary to our nature and taught us by priests that we may overcome our nature and save our souls. Duty lies at the very root of life; it is life and growth; it is work, service, renunciation. Duty, as I shall yet show you and you shall come to believe, is freedom itself. And when we understand better in science and in wisdom the true import of duty and the ethics of freedom, we shall come nearer to interpreting the master-law of life, which holds in leash all lesser laws, despite their apparent conflict and confusion.

And as the daisy shines in beauty because it declares the moral equivalent of its being, so does all right living shine in some kind of radiant symmetry. And Beauty, being Truth, is as much a function in life as is

obedience to the Law; for the life well lived is the incarnation of Truth, and manifests its nature in Beauty.

I have many more things that I would gladly say upon this vital subject. Again let me say that if you will have them, I will gladly tell you all I know upon some other occasion. For the present I must keep you upon the idea that just as the ordinarily accredited attributes are inseparable components of life in its external uniformity, so the religious sense is one with life. Deprive vitality of any one of its properties, and it ceases, it dies. Take from the Soul her growth, and she dwindles; take from her the control of physical law, and the forces of Nature rend her; take from her the possibility of increase, and her chief function in evolution vanishes; take from her the duty to obey the law of her being,

and she degenerates; take from her the property of work, and she, even the beautiful Soul, becomes parasitic, and insults the eternal Law: and this is not the less true that a common ambition of her sons, in their worship of the graven images Society and Success, is to be parasitic upon their neighbours—to make others work that they may fatten. Lastly, take from the Soul her religious sense and its manifestation in the beauty of her face, and she becomes that for which I find but words that I dare not lightly use for any work created in beauty.

Lastly, all life is endeavour; all living is striving: and this strife is the ethical law at work within us now, as it has been at work from the beginning of our evolution. So far as this ethical law succeeds in enlisting in its service servants who both work in obedience and strive to better their work,

the Law succeeds in the production of work which all pronounce beautiful; it makes the faces of its servants shine in manifestation of its might. I believe that the more you observe for yourselves the facts of Nature, the more surely will it be revealed to you that life cannot be divorced from religion without disaster. This the prophets have ever taught, and their words have been true only because their master is the Will of the Law.

(iv). But I have yet more to say concerning the religion of renunciation as observed in Nature; for I would have you understand that renunciation is as much concerned in the fulfilment of the Law as is that reciprocal exchange of service upon which I laid so much stress in my first lecture.

We may say that the sense of meek citizenship which we found among the

sponge-individuals is, although indubitably evidence of altruism, still based upon egoism, seeing that each one serves because of his needs, and from no disinterested motives. True also is it that in the daisy, where renunciation is more definite, the sacrifice of the masculine virility to the production of beauty may still be regarded as egoistic, seeing that definite gain may be won to themselves as well as to their two-sexed neighbours. Nevertheless, in the daisy an upward step in growth of obligation is manifest; for if the yellow florets give pollen to their white-rayed servants, they do quite as much for other yellow ones in a neighbouring or distant daisy—and they do not serve as the white ones serve, with some measure of personal disinterestedness, and with the sense of the obligation to manifest the Law in beauty.

THE WILD GUELDER-ROSE (*Viburnum Opulus*)

Showing inner fertile and outer neuter flowers

And I am now going to tell you of the wild guelder-rose, because it carries us another step onwards. Here we have in each head of flowers a number of individuals, though few as compared with the daisy's (Plate V.). These individuals live quite separately, and are not all seated on a common base; each is obviously complete and independent. They seem to be congregated together in a sort of chosen, rather than compulsory, companionship. Theirs is a sort of society for mutual improvement and pleasure, rather than a co-operative workshop like the daisy. You know how different the flowers occupying the more central positions of the guelder-rose are from those forming the irregular outer zone. Each of the inner ones is a small, complete, but not strikingly pretty, bisexual flower. With these alone the guelder-rose tree would not be so

beautiful an object in our woods; for the creamy colour of its flowers, some half buried in the leafy green, some freely dancing in the wind, is all due to the large-petalled outer flowers, which herald to the world in banners of beauty the service in which their humbler companions rejoice. But these fine outer flowers, observe, have relinquished all personal purpose; they are neuters; they take no share in the work of the guelder-rose tree; they do not breathe, as do the leaves, to cull carbon from the air; they do not drink with the roots to draw minerals from the soil for the strengthening of their habitation; they produce neither pollen nor ova. That they may obey the Law in its need of them for a purpose transcending the immediate privileges of their fruitful neighbours, they have relinquished their rights in the Law's intent.

How then, you may ask, if they do no work either for themselves or for the community, do they serve the law of the flower's being? How, you will ask, do they declare the beauty of the guelder-rose in so unequivocal a manner? How, if they are not useful, do they become beautiful? What truth do they manifest?

Notwithstanding such just and most profitable questions, we shall presently fully understand that it is only because these neuters serve that they are beautiful; it is only because we instinctively have knowledge that this must be so that we call them beautiful.

To me there are few things in Nature that more simply show us the meaning of Beauty than this wayside guelder-rose. Its beauty-flowers have renounced their highest privileges; they have forgotten social laws

whose very essence is the recognition of mutual advantage. And why? That they may serve the Law which has need of them beyond their own life or the life of their fellows. And in this renunciation they declare the glory of the Law, they shine in manifesting the Truth which is the sun of the all-embracing brotherhood.[1] Yet these flowers which do no work for their community still serve, but in wider obligation than their fellows, in larger sense of beauty. These neuters also could have no beauty but for their utility. The Law has a

[1] I confess I have some doubt whether the indisputable fact that insects are necessary to fertilization fully explains the production of these neuter flowers, which, by the way, we find similarly displayed by the blue cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*). The guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*) is first-cousin, so to speak, to the wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*). Their conditions of soil and locality are identical, and the flowers differ only in the absence of neuters in the warfaring tree. Yet the flowers of the latter are no less surely fertilized than those of the guelder-rose.

need of them transcending themselves and their community ; and, so far as they serve this need, they shine, and we call them beautiful. We are amply justified in believing that the Law must indeed have need of every living thing to serve and declare, however little we have understanding of the fact, and however strenuously some of us unimaginative human members of the vast community of life may doubt our dependence upon the eternal or deny the reality of the religious sense.

I have at this point plunged and dragged you with me into the very springs of thought in whose waters philosophers love to bathe, in which some simple-minded men and women, unversed in lore or literature, find pure drink for their thirsty souls, good solace for their sorrowing hearts, but which springs the men of mere academic or

commercial science are curiously apt to find unprofitable.

In first speaking to you of the need of work and the nobility of service in the economy of life, because of the advantages thereby accruing to individual and society, I said no more than every man who is not a parasite would acclaim as good science and profitable to our belief in utilitarian ethics. But I then dived into the unknown, and spoke, in terms no less strong, of the Law's need of its creatures, and of their obligation to manifest the truth inherent in their creation. And it is for you individually to agree with or smile at me.

To one who has never felt what Beauty is, who has not profited, nor his work profited, by its inspiration, I find I cannot speak. To talk with such a one would be nigh as

reasonable as for a lark to sing of sunshine to a blind, burrowing mole. Many things are unknown to us, which, though they cannot be demonstrated on a blackboard or in a test-tube, yet manifest themselves in truth too deep for words, alike to those who are simple-hearted and to those whose wisdom is profound. We cannot prove to you in laboratories or from professorial chairs how mighty a thing is love, how weighty in reality is honour, how grand an item in our lives is this sense of abstract yet enduring truth. So little can we do these things that our philosophies and sciences should, in their worship of consistency, laugh at such paradoxes as a man dying for his country when his death would not serve it, or another dying in flames rather than be apostate from a creed that was absurd. And yet we know—some of us at any rate—that

we would rather mankind ceased to advance in prosperity and education than that the most priceless of our emotional inheritances, love, honour, and this inherent sense of an unintelligible fitness in Beauty, should wane in our hearts. These undecipherable, unseen, intangible ideas are bigger factors in our lives, we truly know, than dividends; bigger elements in our nature than even intellectual riches. And it is in the deep appreciation of these realities, abstractions though they be, that the simple-minded and the uneducated may have closer touch with the Kingdom of Heaven than those exalted in pulpits or academies or exchanges, because these babies in ignorance more truly, if mutely, live in service of the Law.

Yet how is it, we must ask in this pursuit of understanding, that we have learned thus

to reverence these abstract ideas, when they are so little regarded as social needs or as commercial assets? Just because we hold in us, along with our other inheritances in feeling, an instinctive fund of *common sense*; just because we know, somewhere deeper in our souls than broods our intelligence, that no such inheritance can live and last through the ages as these great emotions have done, save in virtue of their need to man, save because of their utility and necessity. Had the finer aspects of love, renunciation, honour, and such-like, no active share in the lives of men, they would have disappeared as useless and unprofitable long ages since—just as the eyes have gone from those animals who for æons have lived and bred in lightless caves. The very fact that these abstract feelings are paramount in our lives, even though often debased to low uses, is proof

to our common-sense intelligence of their reality and utility; and in their last and nobler uses, I say, they rise beyond and above the plane of serving either fellow man or society, and proclaim to us their relation in utility to the vast and, but for these inheritances, unknown depths of our being. It is in such wise that the most beautiful traits in man's nature—as, by common and instinctive consent, we admit the passion of a service in love and renunciation to be—proclaim that the truth of the Law, which has ordered these things, transcends the utilitarianism of mundane philosophies, politics, and religions.

And so it is in our sense of the beauty given forth by the useless neuter flowers of the guelder-rose: for they proclaim that there are other duties than the serving of self and society; that Truth is the law

embracing all things; that the Law is manifest in Beauty, and has need of its creatures for this high function. And this is not the less true that the transcendental can seldom be manifested save in living for others, although at times it rises into the heights of passionate renunciation not only of self, but even of the rights of society. Some will die rather than lie even to save a neighbour.

Thus do daisy and guelder-rose show their sense of obligation and their privilege in renunciation. Thus do they justify my use of them to demonstrate our dependence upon a wonderful environment lying beyond mundane life and labour. Thus do they proclaim that even the flowers, if we may say they have sense of life, have also sense of obligation. And obligation means religion.

I am still intent, I trust, in spite of any

appearance of dogmatism in my argument, upon understanding any objections that seek expression in your thoughts. I should, I fear, think very ill of my audience's intellectual powers if they were not prepared with some opposition to my claims. That man who will believe in God because it is customary to do so is, in my mind, as poor a creature as one who would be willing to accept the propositions of Euclid as proven without troubling to understand them.[1] Many things, I admit and indeed hope, must be true that are beyond our understanding; but, just because we are bound to this fact, we are less justified in setting limits to our understanding. Proof is one thing; but I

[1] A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.—MILTON'S *Areopagitica*.

think there is a form of understanding that ranks higher. To prove that a flower declares the glory of God is not possible to the greatest intellect that ever lived or ever shall live; yet to understand something of this sense of beauty in a flower, although it cannot be stated in words, is possible to the pure in heart, be they ever so dull in scholastic attainments. Is it not so?

For my part I set out to prove to you nothing. My hope is but to make you ask bigger questions than some, at least, ever thought were held in Nature's catechism. And not the less do I seek to answer some of the questions that must arise in your minds perhaps in objection to the method of my argument; or if I cannot answer them, I hope to show you, I repeat, how to look at some questions set by Nature

in terms bigger than you at first could understand.

The point I have reached is this: the relation of utility to ethics and æsthetics. For two of your questions at any rate are audible to me: one comes from the scientists, and the other from the idealists. The scientist, with eager attack, will assure me that all this beauty of the flowers, if such we must call it, is but utilitarian and prompted by self-interest; for by it the flowers attract the bees to the furtherance of cross-fertilization, just as the bees are not disinterestedly assisting the nuptials of the flowers by hawking about pollen, but are merely seeking honey and food for their hives. Do I mean, he will ask, in derision of my idealism, to deny that the gay and distinctive colours of flowers have primarily this utilitarian intent? Do I mean to affirm

that the guelder-rose's object in producing the neuter flowers is not to attract insects for the better propagation of its species? Also, turning to ethics, he will assert that all morality is but the law of social advantage, and that social obligation is only such because of advantage to the individual; and he will challenge me to show that the religious sense, if such there be, is other than the instinct of the individual as to his own interest in the preservation of the laws of social morality. It is largely because of this challenge, which is heralded with so brazen a trumpet through the woods of the soul's quiet hopes, that I am addressing you.

And the idealist, with saddened heart, blames me for a utilitarian. He asks me whether I do not degrade the finest idea alike of beauty and morals by proving them to be, after all, only utilitarian.

As briefly as possible I will reply to both animadversions.

In the first place our scientist finds sufficient explanation of the meadow's gaiety and garden's delight in the fact that those vegetable lives have best survived and propagated their species who have, accidentally, I suppose, produced such symmetry of form and brilliance of colour as make them easily distinct from afar to the bees and butterflies who seek their honey. And this mutual dependence is not theory, as you know, but fact. The red clover, for instance, cannot exist in the Antipodes because the humble-bee cannot be acclimatized there; and without this insect to carry pollen from anthers to pistils, the species dies. Those flowers, the biologist will say, which give best honey to bees set out the gayest flags to mark their habitations; and certain flowers

thus become entirely dependent for their species' persistence upon the ministration of insects. In their supply of honey and brave proclamation as to where in the meadows such honey is sold, the flowers reveal the principle of a utilitarianism which, in the simple language of those who are not philosophers, is recognized as beauty.

Let us consider for a moment this mutual dependence of insect and flower. We have on the one hand highly organized, intellectual animals with brains and five senses, legs, wings, and muscles; on the other hand we have lowly vegetables lacking nervous system and brain, rooted to the soil, chained in submission to ordeal, having no knowledge of life beyond some dim sense of wind and rain, light and darkness, and perhaps an acknowledgment of the wonderful when the big

bee drops upon their slender forms to rob and to fertilize. This mutual dependence, I believe, cannot be explained except by the recognition of a law in evolution, that held in view, during the building up of the flowers, the building up also of the insects and their communities. It can be understood and explained only by the law of evolution, and then only if we hold that the law had cognizance of the advantages in mutual dependence that should accrue to both flowers and insects. Otherwise we must suppose an intellectual sense on the part of the flowers themselves, a foresight in evolution on the part of the insects themselves; whereas the understanding and foresight belong to the Law. This mutual dependence of flower and insect upon a common property, the appreciation of colour and consequent manifestation of beauty, justifies us in placing

these species in a class together, though they are as widely different in their structure as any two species could be. And I maintain that such system of classification will not be the less just that it is not scientific, but transcendental; not factual, but ideal. I maintain, further, that the law responsible for the evolution, side by side, of insect and flower could have brought them together only by the holding of these two domains of its creation together in a common intent. On the other hand, if such a theory is in opposition to our facts (and I maintain that it is nothing of the kind); if this mutual dependence of those widely different species is not the outcome of a law embracing both; then the mutual service is all *accident.*

But not even the biologist is always scientific, I fear. For him to admit such

influence as the accidental in the production of life is the rankest heresy conceivable—rank as is the superstition of the philosopher's stone in the nostrils of the chemist—rank as is belief in the earth's flatness to the soul of the astronomer. For what do we mean by accident? That which comes about in manner contrary to the ordered and usual course of events. Law, I take it, is the ordered sequence and unfolding of events; and vital law differs from mere physical law solely in this, that purpose rules its operations. All that life does is done for the attainment of some object: all vital action is purposed, whatever the process may be that has instigated the desire or purpose leading to action. Whether or no this is the truth about life, accident cannot be defined otherwise than in one of two ways. Accident is either that which was not

expected, or that which happens in opposition to, or in different form from, the supposed normal course of events. If by accident the biologist means the former, we must praise his somewhat accidental, because unexpected, modesty; for he admits that the limits of his narrow theory of evolution do not cover all phenomena. If by accident, on the other hand, he means the abnormal, that which is beyond the pale of the Law, then I advertise him as no scientist: for he holds that the paramount force in evolution is the influence of the illegal; he claims possession of a philosopher's stone that can transmute all law and phenomena into that which is meaningless; he pins his faith upon No-law.

No, the beauty of the flowers is not a mere imaginary by-product of mutual utility, but is the outward and visible manifestation,

the deliberate, determinate manifestation of the inward and transcendental Idea which, greater than the law of the evolution of species, because it has itself evolved that law, embraces the insect- and flower-world in a community of mutual service and individual manifestation. Do *not* take my word for it: spend your lives in searching for accident, that most stupid of man's creations in slothfulness, and you will never find it. Law is eternal and ubiquitous: that which is bereft of the Law is vanished; that which the Law has not conceived lives only in the foolishness of our limitations.

And although you scientists may affirm that I have not answered your objections, I have put to you some questions which you must answer for me before I can teach you further. Why and how the initial steps

in the evolution of bee desirous of honey and unknowingly bartering pollen, or of flower desiring fertility and giving honey to the brown-hued priests of Hymen,—why and how such initial steps were taken in beginnings long before such beginnings could give evidence of a utility we find only in their consummation—this question you shall at least ask, though the only answer may appear to you unscientific. Yet the answer, though it cannot be demonstrated in material facts, is but the recognition of a law greater than those we can demonstrate; while the alternative, the theory of accident, gives the lie to man's highest intellectual faculty, his instinctive belief in the Law as the very nature and soul of things. And if I have not answered your objection, at any rate I have made you see that the fact of this utilitarian give-and-take between flower and

insect must arise also in obedience to the great Law which is beyond the knowledge alike of gifted bee and guelder-rose. If I have to admit our mental limitations on account of our ignorance, I have nevertheless made you see that these limitations, although we affirm beauty to be the outcome of the insects' and flowers' mutual serving, do not deprive us of a right to explain this beauty as the expression of transcendental obedience.

And you scientists, just as you would set limits to the operations of a law of which the furthest-seeing of us have but the glimmering of an understanding, you seek also to find the limits of virtue in what you consider to be common-sense utility; and in this wise you must object to my enlarging our conception of ethics beyond what is demonstrable as fact. And yet I am,

throughout my attempt at interpreting virtue and beauty, adopting your own theory, and saying that nothing is good which is not serving, nothing is fair except in so far as it proclaims the law of its service. I even endorse your apotheosis of common-sense: but with this difference, that I attempt to give it even a higher place among the gods of our intellectual household than you would approve, and affirm it to be an instinct so priceless that it must stand side by side with the religious sense. For I say that when the goddess Common-sense tells us we have free-will, we must believe in the freedom of will for all we are worth; when she speaks of love transcending self-advantage, we dare not question her; when she tells some of us that Beauty illuminates the firmament of truth, we have no right, because we are

scientific men, to call our goddess a mere graven image.

In my third lecture I shall discuss further the reality of the religious sense in man as a sense that transcends social obligation. For the present I claim to be in large agreement with the utilitarian. But if I admit that ethics have in view no more than the welfare of the individual, the community, and the race, it is upon the understanding that individual, community, and race hold essential in their very nature ideals that transcend dividends and are inimical even to contentment.

And now for the second question, which I guessed that you idealists were asking. Do I not, you ask, lower our exalted meaning of the ethical and the beautiful in finding that, when all is said, they depend upon utility? Is not, you ask, our very

conception of morality something which transcends advantage? Do I not degrade art to mere commercialism when I say that our sense of the beautiful is but our sense of what is successful? Have I forgotten that I declared transcendentalism to be hope or belief in that which is paramount to the *modus vivendi*?

And if you ask me these questions, and do so partly because of the things I am seeking to teach you, you must know that I ask them also, and in the asking find answer. You feel with me that it is altogether essential that we should be clear upon these points, not only for the sake of our own intellectual honour—the most precious perhaps of all honours—but that we may present a firm front to those who say that creeds are but policies of insurance against certain unpleasant contingencies,

invented by mad fanatics or greedy priesthoods.

While we should deny, with our very lives if need be, such imputations upon the saints and prophets of the earth, such mean belittling of those whom, in our better common-sense, we know to be the greatest among men and women, we will yet admit to the full, as I have just now declared, the theory of the utilitarian philosopher: we will join with him in affirming that nothing is good which does not serve, that nothing is beautiful which does not express its service. This must be the creed alike of utilitarian and idealist. But the idealist's admission will be fuller than the utilitarian's, because it transcends his, because it declares that life serves the Law in ways that altogether transcend knowledge and philosophy. The beauty of the sunflower and daisy is

such because it transcends their obligation to their species, and shines in recognition of a law that embraces needs beyond those of the natural order, *Compositae*; because they have some sense, transcending the understanding of the botanist and zoologist, of affinities with the bees and the butterflies, some dim feeling of privilege in serving the great world that includes and yet is beyond and above themselves.

Yet I can imagine an idealist who may still be dissatisfied with this definition of faith; for he feels that any attempt at complete understanding alike of Nature or of such divine conceptions as Truth and Virtue, Beauty and Service, must be impious. He would rather be mystic than scientist, rather worship in meek admission of ignorance than sing praises awakened by the understanding of God's ways. If he do so

think, we part company, without further criticism, because together we should but be seeking that which only one of us desires.

But I claim the privilege of the rostrum, and must have the last word. I ask the mystic idealist, and he may be Calvinist or Papist, Evangelical or High Churchman, if he will conceive of a system of morality or of beauty that shall be altogether independent of utilitarian intent? He would perhaps make charity so absolutely dissociated from advantage that bread cast upon the waters could by no possibility return after many days; and the wonderful weaving of human society into a fabric designed for some unknown purpose, so that not a strand of its warp is weak without the whole suffering, and not a thread of its weft shines but the whole is enlightened, cannot appear to

him admirable. For our part, nevertheless, the fact that virtue must bring its own reward, perhaps after many days, and in a sense not measurable in terms of mundane commercialism, in no way can detract from the purity and disinterestedness of such virtue. It is one thing to cast bread upon the waters because it may return to us, and we get the credit of our charity; and it is another thing to share our last crust and find, despite our consequent hunger, comfort in the thought of the simple-hearted that God can give us bread to cure all hunger, and that, in our self-denial, we gain an eternal reward. The question is not so much whether right action is rewarded by its consequences, as whether the prospective gain is ethically desirable. To conceive of a system of ethics that is purposeless or unutilitarian is as ridiculous as to conceive

that the omnipotence of God will be satisfactorily proved only when He is shown to create without purpose. That, I take it, is more than the most exacting atheist would demand in his idea of a God he could worship! To conceive of a system of ethics that is purposeless, that loses merit if shown to be advantageous, is to suppose a spirit of tyranny and no-law to be paramount in the universe.

No, we can hardly reason with the mystic; nor can we reason with one who claims that everything is revealed. Yet, as there is mystery in the beauty of the daisy and miracle in the work of the guelder-rose, so there is science and law ever revealing to us that, beyond and behind even these common things, which we love the more just because of their mystery, there is a divineness of utilitarian intent, a grace of service to man and all his brothers in the universe of life.

I crave one word more on the subject of the religion of renunciation, because I would have you understand that it is an absolutely real factor in life. For the moment I am not discussing its relation to man, though we may see with a little thought that even his species cannot escape from renouncing self in an unrecognized sense of the Law's needs. I would have you realize how much it is part of the very nature of life to possess the sense that individual behests are secondary not only to social needs, but to the Law's needs of the service of its creatures. Nor is there cruelty on the part of the Law that it demands this sacrifice. The lark feels no hardship in sitting upon her eggs while her mate is delighting his heart in the sky: yet she has renounced her personal joy in exchange for a peaceful serving of the law which has need of her fledglings; indeed, it is because

of the mother's service in the great mystery of life that the joys of maternity are so real in their ideality. Both the bird's and the human mother's love-hope is what we know it to be, not because of the consciously looked for reward of their waiting, but because of the deep instinct of serving and union with the transcendental power which we wise men yet say we can know nothing about. That the bird feeds her nestlings with worms before she satisfies her own hunger, I can well believe; that the starving woman gives her milk to her baby even though knowing that thereby her own need of food becomes greater, is matter of fact. There may be a mundane cruelty in the woman's hunger, and more in the fact that she cannot feed the little one who looks to her for all things; but she never ascribes cruelty to her instinct that her baby's need must be satisfied

before her own, even though she is of use in the world and his use is only prospective.

Even in this terrible law of evolution, which often looks to us like an inexorable, merciless tyranny, sacrificing the weak and the failing that the stronger may survive and advance the excellence of the species, I find no cruelty. For lion meets lion in deadly conflict that the better of the two of them may survive for the furtherance of the Law's needs; and to them the fight is the delight of the moment. Each is willing for—nay, is driven to—the contest by the unknown Law's impelling, which is their instinct each to make and assert his personal excellence and fitness for survival. Even, I suspect, in the destruction of the maimed by the strong we may perceive, not so much cruelty, as the strange desire, untempered by love or mercy, that only the

fit should survive; indeed, I think this instinct may be actually merciful to the unfit, if his fellows can save him from hindering the Law.

But these points take us too far afield from the present topic: I have touched upon them that you may not think I am optimistically declining to look in the face all the things that to us who suffer and love must be horrors in the Law's workings. At the moment I want you to realize that, so far from there being hardship in the Law's need of our work, and in our renunciation of personal delights, it may be quite the reverse. If the hopes upon which the best citizens build their lives are based upon truth, then self-sacrifice, being but obedience to the Law's higher need of us, is our greater delight and reasonable privilege. So strong in some men and

women is this instinctive desire for renunciation that it takes foolish forms—foolish because unutilitarian, foolish because they suppose an unreasoning God will be gratified by a self-renunciation that is purposeless. It is the instinctive desire for serving God in some great way that makes the willing martyr glad in his heart; and it is no less the same instinct, foolish though its manifestations be, that induces senseless asceticism—senseless when purposeless and furthering no ideal of the Law, the state, or the person It is the desire for such service, I think, although it is often basely accentuated by a desire for propitiating an unreasoning and purposeless Deity, that lies at the root of many fastings and sacrifices, and impels ignorant and foolish devotees to cast their children and themselves beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut car.

Indeed, I doubt whether the Law is so regardless of the individuals of a given species as would appear from its dominant need of the species' betterment. Much that we call suffering appears as such only because we imagine what our own pain would be if we were placed in like circumstances. In the same stupid spirit we blame a man for failure in doing what is easy to ourselves. One in agony with toothache cannot believe that another, having as bad a tooth, has yet no pain. One knowing no temptation to steal because he is cursed with a superfluity of worldly goods, cannot judge of the smallness of sin in a brother who takes from him what he does not need. It is better to be hungry, even though the hunger bring temptation, than to be surfeited, even though compulsory virtue is the recompense. We cannot measure either the cruelties or the

mercies of the Law: for judgment may be salvation; and profit, as held by most men, may be damnation. Similarly the life of renunciation, even when ordered in wise obedience, may look hateful, even cruel, to one who finds in pleasure a sufficient reason for living: to such a one it were as useless to talk of the joy of living the life needed by the Law as it were to argue with a Hottentot on the solaces of literature.

No, talk how you will as to the necessity of all virtue being disinterested and beauty exalted above utility, you cannot evade the fact that virtue has excellence only so far as it brings the Kingdom of God into our lives and thus brings us joy; that beauty is such only so far as it reveals the truth of God's intent, be it immediate or prospective in its fulfilment.

The Religion of Freedom

III

THE RELIGION OF FREEDOM

YOU will have suspected from my preceding lectures that I observe a process of evolution or advance, in slow, perhaps erratic, yet certain steps, from the most elementary indications of the religious sense in structureless forms of life, up to its manifestation in our relatively exalted selves. And this subservience to the Law results first in the establishment of ethical obligation to the Law, that is of conscious and wilful obedience, and secondly in the development of that freedom which appears to be the purposed outcome of the Law's intent. But

the process of the development of a purely passive sense of obligation into a consciously active sense of ethical privilege can hardly be traced within the compass of one lecture. To attempt this would involve an examination of the evolution of self-consciousness, through which alone can come understanding of our relation to the law of life. This is too wide a theme even to touch upon now, and I must be content in this lecture with examining the bearing of religious obligation upon the development of ethical freedom. Such a promise must, I fear, sound formidable enough; yet I think this lecture will prove easier than my other two.

But before I start my argument I want to say a preliminary word in defence of my method. You might casually think that because the whole of this lecture will be devoted to a consideration of the relation

of man to the law of his being, I have abandoned my position of scientist. But it is not so. For what is science but the study and understanding of facts and the laws which their relation to one another as cause and effect reveal? And man is surely not the less a good subject for this method of study that, in some of his properties, experimental analysis will hardly help us to their interpretation. I maintain that precisely as we can study the nature of a sponge and a daisy in its philosophical aspect by scientific process, so we can study man; and, in the same method with which I began I shall end. Even in man, I maintain, the religious sense is susceptible of proof. Yet this proof is not found in the method of some theologians, whose very basis of argument depends upon the assumption that the Scriptures are divinely inspired in a sense contrary

to necessity, reason, and facts. In a profounder sense the evidence of inspiration may be clear enough: as all work shines in beauty the more finely it is inspired by the Law, so in the Scriptures we may find intrinsic evidence of inspiration. Nevertheless, we cannot present this assumed, or to some of us revealed, evidence of the inspiration of the gospels as fact; and therefore the method of the less intellectual theologian is not scientific. His position may be sound or it may not: we are not now considering it. We are seeking facts that shall scientifically corroborate or refute his teachings that God has given us talents and holds us responsible for their increase. This is my preliminary word.

(i). You will perhaps remember that I promised in this my third lecture to discuss further the reality of this religious sense as a

factor in our inner consciousness. This is the more imperative seeing that it is common among those who would be fashionable in their intellectual garments to question the reality of this transcendental sense. Many indeed profess to have no feeling of that need of touch with the infinite which is so powerful an impulse in some to live cleanly and to better the world for those who shall yet come. Others, although not devoid of the religious sense, are so genuinely shocked by the patronage of religion because of its respectability or fine traditions—are so rightly contemptuous of such as go to church for example to their servants, or who grind the faces of the poor to parade their religious zeal in finery,—that they prefer to boast an honest agnosticism. And others, yet again, are so absorbed in their pursuits, be they household drudgery, scientific

investigations, classical erudition, politics, or mere money-making, that there is no room left in their hearts for this sense to germinate and grow, though it is foremost among their inheritances and priceless even in its work-a-day worth. Be the reason what it may, the objector commonly explains the religious instinct by affirming it to be the inheritance of a superstition instilled into the people in past ages, whether by ignorant and greedy priesthoods or by timid and tyrannical thrones, in order that the multitudes may be kept from a knowledge of their rights and their power.

Our environment, on the other hand, such a one will say, teems with appeals to our altruistic sense on behalf of suffering humanity; our paths are beset with churches and cemeteries, Bibles and illuminated texts, all of which stimulate our

fear of death, if, indeed, they are not responsible for it; and our conversation is interlarded with phrases like love, honour, justice, etc., which have assumed transcendental equivalents, although meaning nothing beyond personal advantage and social expediency. Such factors as these, our agnostic says—some of them necessary to society, although misinterpreted by priests and poets; some of them merely the fantasies of fear—form an environment from which we cannot escape. Between them they conjure up a condition of mind which, he thinks, must be artificial because not universal, and imaginary because not a measurable equivalent. And this is the condition of mind, he holds, which is called by the priests, by some wise men, and by many who are intellectually uncultured, the sense of religion.

Some among the best of good citizens

think and boast that they do not possess the religious sense and do not desire it. They mount on stilts, look down on the heads of those who walk on the mere legs of their inheritance, and forget that their position is remarkable rather than normal. They think they have supplanted part of their birthright, and do better without it; and then, in natural sequence of thought, they hold that it never was real. Or, if they do not thus express themselves, they claim that, even if the religious or superstitious sense does still exist for some belated wanderers in evolution, these had best follow their own example and rise superior to its influence. And they have not yet learned that, in certain common contingencies, a stilted elevation of superiority may prove disastrously untenable. Finally, they argue that, even should the religious sense be in

any way beneficial to individual or society, it is none the less the production of the environment and is not essential in the nature of man.

In conclusion of my claim as to the reality of the religious sense I must detain you for a few minutes, while I answer these two objections, the first being (*a*) that the sense is not real because many do not, or think they do not, possess it; and the second (*b*) that the sense is merely an artificial product of an artificial environment, and is not natural to man.

(*a*) Assuming for the moment that I am dealing with one really devoid of the religious sense—that is, of conscious ethical obligation towards any idea beyond the needs of individual or society—I find I am compelled to consider either that he is incapable of seeing the very data of our discussion, or

that myself am illogical in producing purely unreal fact for argument. But if the sense be real, it stands to reason that he is beyond the pale of understanding that it is so. No argument of a Tennyson will make one whose soul dwells only within the limitations of a physiological laboratory understand the truth lying in poetry. No amount of evidence adduced by the lark could make the mole believe that the light of heaven was better than all the earthy advantages denied to the winged priest of the sun: either the lark is a fool or the mole is demented. Either the poet trespasses beyond the confines of reason or the physiologist is enslaved by an unenterprising contentment with his prison-walls. Either, I repeat, the poet or the physiologist is insane: a point for our determination of prime importance. But since there be poets

who are wise and physiologists who at times walk the meadows in delight, they may find an agreement, if they will, deep in their common nature.

I very much question, moreover, if the sense is really absent in any who are sane, or who have not destroyed the nature of their fine inheritance by living in opposition to the Law, in vice, luxury, or cynicism. What honest man is there, let me ask you, however much he may deplore what he considers the lack of reason in the churches or resent the intolerance of dogmatics, who is incapable of rising above the demands of his reason and tacitly asserting that he is servant of a transcendental law? How so? my opponent will ask.

Even a bad man, I answer, may upon occasions in his life be confronted with some deep need of action that transcends what

is called reason and mundane justification. Many years ago men used to talk more about their personal honour than, most fortunately, they do now; it often implied little more than a readiness to take offence at any doubt cast upon their purity of motive or truthfulness of word, whether such suspicion was or was not justified. It was a miserable ideal, because a mockery of the truth; and yet it was perhaps better than no ideal. And because of their instinctive feeling that the true ideal had claims upon them, they would defend its semblance with their lives if need be, putting its justice to the test of the sword. I am not extolling the custom any more than I would the instinct to strike any man who stands in our way; but I do yet think it indicates an innate feeling that even the most wretched and self-serving men have in them a mighty

respect for the ideal man which they know they represent in some fashion, however much their lives may contradict it. They feel, although inconsistently with reason and profit, that whenever the honour of a man is at stake because an accusation, just or unjust, is allowed to pass unchallenged, they must risk their lives in defence of the ideal. Of course, such a man never attempts to justify his action in this way: he merely fights because he is angry and would rather fight than not do so. Nevertheless, I believe he is impelled by a dim, unreasoned sense of obligation to ethical ideal, and, brute though he be, will fight in its service. Thus, I say, he gives evidence of possessing some measure of religious sense, though it is purely involuntary; though it perhaps proclaims the man who possesses but does not justify it to be ethically degraded below

the sponges of the ocean or the flowers of the field.

But this involuntary manifestation of the strength of our ideal as to what a man should be may take high place in action, and, when welded to some understanding—that is, when fought for in deliberation and not in anger—it becomes, I think, a potent proof of the activity of the religious sense. I am now supposing the case of the virtuous citizen who yet denies that he has any feeling or desire for religion. For instance, I conceive that many a man of this description, if blackmailed, will run all the risks of exposure rather than sanction the lie and insult given to his personal honour; and in this virtuous citizen the personal honour may truly symbolize the ideal, and thus may be worthy of protection. As a good citizen he will of course be strengthened

in his determination to face the accusation by the urgent need of ridding society of its enemy. But beyond this, I believe, is an ideal sense of honour and justice, and of obligation to serve the ideal rather than the laws of expediency and utility, although the fulfilment of this duty may prove unprofitable, and possibly disastrous, to a man's self and his family.

Again, many a scoffer at religion, many a useless society-lounger, many a one even who degrades his manhood by driving women into hell, may upon occasion rise into the very noblest heights of voluntary self-sacrifice. His commanding officer, his regiment or his country may demand any impossible task they please, and he will face certain death rather than betray his manhood ; he will die rather than surrender, though the battle be lost. And what will

impel him to such unutilitarian course of action? Nothing whatever but the religious sense. Even if it be altogether compulsive of his actions, even though he obeys the high ideal because something makes him do so, and without his voluntary consent to its urging, it is no less evidence of the activity of the religious sense. And when such soldier has a moment or hour in which to think out his course of action, when he determines to sacrifice his life and renounce even his family's need of him rather than see the honour of his country derided, then he rises, I think, into the very heights of ethical service, and does more for self, for country, for the eternal law of his being than he or we have the faintest conception of. And because he loved honour much, much should be forgiven him.

And correspondingly, I think, no one of

us, however much he may emotionally or intellectually, in converse or in observance, proclaim his belief in the religious sense, can know how strong or how weak it is within him until he has been tried under fire. Be this as it may, the religious sense is absolutely real, perhaps the most essentially real of all our inheritances from the unknown ultimate parentage whence we are come.

(*b*) But I have still the second objection to dispose of—namely, that the religious sense, granted it be an active force, is but the artificial product of an artificial environment. This claim you shall soon understand is too foolish to need many words.

But before clearing up the point—and I think it is of utmost importance that we should do so—I want to make perfectly plain what we mean by the word environment. We

may say that every person lives in two worlds, one inside and one outside. They are both essential to existence. The inside world can include as much of the outside as it takes in; and our eyes and ears, our senses of touch, smell, and taste put us into communication with this outside world: we may say they are messengers who bring news of what is profitable in the external world for the inner citadel's enlargement. The more good things these messengers bring us the finer grows this inner life and the further the citadel extends its walls. Thus does the environment contribute to our inner life, our maintenance and growth. To use another metaphor, the environment is the soil in which we live, and never the life itself. And whether the environment serves us with nourishment or hardship, it is, according to the evolutionists, the contention with and

surmounting of environmental difficulties that have led to the growth of great lives from small beginnings, and the elaboration of complex species from a simple and common parentage. The acorn grows into the oak-tree because of the ever-increasing power of the roots to contend with the hard soil; because of the increase of strength to resist the wind that seeks to break the sapling; because of the tree's ever-growing vitality to withstand excess of rain and hot sun that would rot or wither its blossoms. The soil and the rain and the sun are the environment of the oak-tree; they operate as much in beneficence as in discipline. For the world outside us affords us means of subsistence and increase of strength in food and drink and things to contend with. Moreover, if ever the environment proves too hard and threatens starvation, be it to

our hopes or to our mere subsistence, we suffer, and the beneficent angel, Pain, enters our walls to warn and admonish us. On the other hand, if ever the environment offers ease so great that we grow fat, our strength is enfeebled: then indeed the power of existence may be so weakened that we die, and this time perhaps without warning. Nor can we forget that the environment in which men and women of exalted life find their subsistence is made up of other men's lives, whose homesteads may be sweetly tended or overrun with weeds.

Thus we cannot explain anything by affirming that it is merely the result of our environment, although at the same time we must admit that without environment nothing would have been evolved. The eye could never have been created but for an environment of things to be seen; and

things to be seen could never have called forth the faculty of seeing them unless the individuals who developed the visual sense had, even before they could see, possessed the germinal, prospective faculty of seeing. This is absolutely clear and axiomatic, is it not? If so, I pray you keep it before your minds in all your reflections upon evolution, heredity, and environment, and you will, I think, find it a clue to the many conflicts of theory and dogma with which we are beset. The environment is essential, but it is not all; the capacity for growth in the acquisition of function is essential, but it could do nothing without material. Germinal possibility and nutritive environment are the father and mother of all vital phenomena. The environment alone can generate nothing.

To argue that, because the idea of religion is the result of an artificial environment

and therefore not essential in man's nature, it must be excluded from our data, were as absurd as it were to discount the importance of the environment in evolving any or all other items in his nature. Nor must we call this or that point in the life and things surrounding us artificial because they are the work of man's hands. You do not think the nest of the bird is part of an artificial environment because the bird has built it; nor can you call man's houses, markets, churches, unnatural because he has built them; nor his clothes, pockets, and gimcracks the mere necessities of an artificial environment because he was not born with them glued to his back. No more can we, as scientists, study the nature of man without seeking to understand those ideas and abstractions which he calls religion and conscience; although, but for the environment

which man has in part made for himself, as the birds their nests, they had never attained their present degree of influence

> Yet nature is made better by no mean
> But nature makes that mean: so, over that art,
> Which you say adds to nature, is an art
> That nature makes . . .
> . . . . . The art itself is nature.

So that, whatever our environment does for us in creating our creed, be this environment church-steeples or factory-chimneys; however much influence these have in the manufacture of our faith or in persuading us of the advantages of science; the environment alone has done nothing for us save in virtue of our proclivities. Yet will we accord all honour to our mother environment, even notwithstanding the loathsome stuff she often physics us with. For she it is who awakens in us the understanding of great needs. She puts before us the

sufferings of our fellows, and teaches us the joy which comes of burdens in sympathy; she shows how our religious sense must live and thrive and even serve our needs; and she reveals to us, in forms of beauty, the form and office of the Law. She shows how we may live in truth, how we may die in the faith that all is well with the Law. It is she that gives strength to our wavering inspiration and teaches us to set our inheritance of hope against our wages of despair. And she it is who teaches us that we must work in service of ourselves so far as the Law has need of our strength; in service of society so far as our fellows have need of us and we of them; and in service, yet again, in renunciation of self, and even sometimes of our duties to the State, so far as we have need of freedom. Of which freedom as the high outcome of

the religious sense I shall presently speak. Once and for all I dismiss the accusation that, because the environment has had share in awakening the religious sense, the latter is to be discredited. The environment has created nothing; yet nothing that was ever created became, save in virtue of the ministrations of the environment.

And I think I have satisfactorily answered the objection of those who, because they do not pray themselves, or because they witness insincerity among those who use forms of prayer, deny the reality of the religious sense.

But now we come to a more difficult question, yet one which it is our need to face fairly and answer truly: for, to me at least, it is of greater import than any I have yet put before you. It is a question, I say, that must be faced honestly; for it

we shirk it, our faith and hope in man and God must go—and then there is no mercy left for our suffering. We dare not refuse to face any danger because our fears have painted it in terror; for this very dread which stands in our way may prove the only thing that could save us from our fears and ourselves. The question now before us is this: how comes it about, if the religious sense is intrinsic in life, that man, notwithstanding his increasing excellence, seems in danger of losing it altogether?

(ii). If the Law had no further need of its creatures than the excellence they would attain through acquiescing in renunciation of self-interest, we should expect to find, as perfection in animal evolution advances, an increasing evidence of dutiful co-operation in fulfilling the ideals of the Law. And by the time that man—babe of a million years'

pregnancy—was born into the world, he should, we may well argue, manifest a possibility of perfection in his prospective manhood. He should, I mean to affirm, if the strength of the religious sense was growing in him in step equal to his intellectual and corporeal excellence, give increasingly definite evidence of its power to rule his life. The automatic religious sense should give unequivocal indication of its expanse into a conscious ethical sense. The religious sense and its influence in ruling individual and co-operative life is perfect in sponge and flower; and in many higher forms, such as the communities of insects of which I shall speak presently, obedience to a law transcending personal needs becomes increasingly manifest. Nevertheless, when man is considered as a species, that is, from the point of view of such characteristics

as are common to every individual, we must admit that the religious sense seems to have degenerated: whether from lack of use, or from the energies of life being devoted to the increasing claims of other functions, is of no consequence. For if the religious sense were paramount in man, as I maintain that it is in the bee, guelder-rose, and sponge, it should have obviated in his life that very disaster which he has brought into the world and fostered as a fine art. Man, I say, has brought sin into the world, and has sought to make it desirable and beautiful that he may justify himself and his denials of the Law's impellings. He has learned to look upon service as hateful except as a means of pleasure. Instead of striving to obey in renunciation, he has sought to compel his neighbour to renounce. He has even laboured to prove that

parasitism is praiseworthy: else how this universal desire to reap where we have not sown, to live on the labour of others?

At first sight, I maintain, our belief in the religious sense is made absurd when we see how it has failed in the finest and latest outcome of the Law's operations, when we must admit that man, more than any form of life, works in opposition to the ideal of his nature, and brings disaster upon himself and his society. How, we are driven to ask, has this disaster become possible if all life is still ruled by the Law?

A true answer ever lies close to a right question. All life, as I have said before, lives solely in virtue of its inspiration to serve even in the humbler offices of egoism and altruism. As soon as these lack inspiration—that is, the sense of correspondence with unknown transcendental ideal—work

degenerates in tone and execution, and fails to reveal in its expression that beauty which should demonstrate the reality of its obligation. Thus may uninspired work prove actually inimical to the religious sense, and bring disaster.

He who claims that self is all, or that the needs of society alone should be considered, is uninspired, unevolutional, and spends his life more or less in opposition to the higher development of the religious sense. Thus ultimately he may lose it, and perhaps become even incapable of understanding that his own lack of a thing does not prove its unreality in another. So that we may draw this conclusion as to the disaster that has befallen us men—that it has come about from the lack of inspiration in our work. It may be through no fault in a man's nature that the religious sense has waned;

it is the fault partly of the environment for which man himself is responsible in large measure; partly because he has served self and environment without any feeling of the inherent nobility in all good work.

(iii). But, you will tell me, I have given you no explanation of the fact that the religious sense, the sense of obligation to an eternal law in which we are as much and as immediately interested as lower forms of life, is so little manifest in our work. Why does not man, with his supremacy of intellect, his command of the earth and sea, his harnessing of physical forces and driving them chained to his chariot of progress, give unequivocal proof of the reality as well as the ideality of his needs in the transcendental? I have already suggested that the explanation is found in man's lack of inspiration to perform his

simplest of duties in a strenuous obedience. Yet this answer, you will rightly object, is no explanation of the fact, seeing that it is but a shifting of responsibility of failure from man's shoulders on to the Law which should give him the needed inspiration. If the Law, you contend, had but continued to inspire man as it inspires the lowly things of life, he had not stumbled upon his disaster; for the Law would never have allowed the sense of obligation to the ideal to grow weak within him.

Your contention is just indeed, and, in other form, it is but the question which every agnostic raises for his vindication; it is but the question which, to my mind at any rate, if it cannot be truthfully and convincingly answered, justifies the fool who said in his heart, "There is no God."

Many a fine man, jealous, passionately jealous, for the dignity of the ideal God whom he would worship in high devotion of service and renunciation if he could but find Him proclaimed in all His works, yet declares that he cannot believe, because of the sin and suffering in the world. If God were just and merciful, omnipotent and forbearing, he says, He would never have permitted sin to take hold upon His creatures and wreck their lives; if each innocent child had a soul which God had given, He would strike down all who drive these little ones before them into misery and hell; if God exists, He is either not omnipotent or not all-loving, or He would not permit vice and suffering. And this is the argument which, I say, we must squarely face, or give up all hope of honest understanding.

I will give you the answer which to

myself at least has made faith possible—nay, which has made it imperative and final: and I hold no brief for the Almighty. If He is all some hope and believe, He needs no special pleading: my desire is but knowledge of the Truth.

In answer to this wide-prevailing argument against God's love and wisdom, I will return to the previous form of the question: How has the Law so failed in man that it has seemingly left him bereft of this most essential of all life's attributes, the instinctive knowledge of his dependence upon and obligation to the eternal law?

The Law's ideal in evolving man, after all, may be higher than the agnostic's ideal of what should imply a perfect God. The Law's aim is that man should serve in a manner more excellent than can be accomplished by the relative automatism of lesser

created things. The Law, for the perfecting of creation, has need of a race of men who shall be great in so far as each one shall manifest the image of God in his person. The Law's design of the great structure which man, like the sponge-sarcode, is unconsciously building, needs for its accomplishment an active understanding of the particular work demanded of each handicraftsman.

If you read Ruskin you will realize at once what I mean. He is at pains to show us that in every great example of Gothic architecture not only is the plan of the architect noble, but each individual workman, notwithstanding his lack of knowledge of the final outcome, is inspired by the great idea and intent of the whole: every line of colour in fresco, every blow of chisel on stone, every bit of gaudy glass set in

mosaic symbol, gives evidence of the intelligence and willing inspiration of each labourer. The architect's idea quickened each workman with his own creating power, and each strove with each, as he strove with the formless stone or naked wall, to excel: not so much that he might earn his wage, as masons are requited now for their exercise of an automatic and mechanical skill, but that he might own a share in the completion of a mighty work, even though he would perhaps not live to see it.

The Law needs for its work—which is the ultimate excellence and joy of all creation—labourers that are freed of their chains, who have in them the possibility of excelling the ungrowing, mechanical average of work. This cannot be done by the sponge-sarcode or by the guelder-rose, or even by the bee. The Law has delegated to man its own

power, and has freed him of his chains, that he may serve in freedom, and proclaim, in the beauty of his labour, the religion of freedom.

Hence, notwithstanding its appearance of limitation, the Law may yet be justified; and this in spite of the fact that, in giving freedom to all, option has become the birthright not only of those masons who create beauty, but also of those who mar their marble and cast the blame upon the Law's limitations. The Law has turned its workshop into a co-operative, profit-sharing concern of unlimited liability, to the spoiling of much of its work, although possibly to the ultimate justification of its initial and prevailing idea.

Is the omnipotence of God then limited in His work? Must we, because of His creatures' freedom to help or to hinder,

judge Him to lack power, mercy, and wisdom? Could He not have made all men free and good, and thus His work perfect, without the suffering, misery, and failure which stand forth from all the fairness of the beautiful earth, and appear to deny that the essence of life is right working?

To make man good without effort of his own were a denial of his freedom, for he would have no choice and be still chained. And it may yet be found that the only limitation of eternal power must be in God's inability to do what is second best, even although the fool thinks he could better believe if he had no option in the design of the marble he must carve.

The only form of society in which sin and evil could be impossible would be one like the insect communities'. Look at the bees. We find in them the type of utter devotion

to labour in service—to service in renunciation. Seldom resting, never complaining, they fill their day full of work as their cells full of honey. Like these, too, each day is closed as an accomplishment in perfection. The personal interest of each bee is an unknown factor in the community, and each enjoys its life in involuntary, ungrudged slavery, inspired by an unconscious instinct of the hive's needs. The queen sacrifices her freedom and delight in flower and sun that the Law may be served. The drones wait in uninterested passivity till one among them shall be chosen for sacrificing his life in the office of fertilization; and only that the needs of the Law may be fulfilled. The queen invites all drones to fly with her, that she may select the fittest for the Law's need; and those who are rejected return to the hive to be hustled, starved, tortured, and killed by

the workers, because the possibility of the drones' use to the community is over. And these drones do not even resist, for it is the will of their law that they die. Impelled by a disinterested automatism, they have no wish but submission.

And so it is throughout this commonwealth of bees. The hive has attained the happy condition of a perfect socialism; their work is the perfect outcome of a high degree of intelligence, and their lives are devoted, with microscopic joy and quaint semblance of virtue, to the needs of the whole. And all their high intelligence, their mathematical precision of work, their devoted altruism and unemotional transcendentalism, have given them nothing of what man prizes as his birthright—Freedom—and through it consciousness of choice and knowledge of consequences. Yet man casts this priceless

gift in the mud, because of the obligations it endows him with; and, having sullied its beauty, he then looks upon it as a proof that its donor was neither good nor powerful. It is because of this very freedom to do or to err that sin has come into our existence.

Would omnipotence be better exemplified, I ask you, if men were no more than bees, obeying because they must instead of because they may? Which indicates the greater power in creating: the bees with perfect subservience to the religious sense, or man with freedom to grow in fellowship with his Maker, even though this very freedom bring with it the possibility of living in opposition to ideal?

(iv). Once upon a time two great chess-players entered upon a contest that for all time should determine their skill. The laws of the game were of their own devising and

different from those now holding: for each was to carve his own men to the best of his ability; and the skill he manifested in his handicraft was to be judged equal with his control of the game. Each, moreover, was to play on a separate board; and wise men were to be brought to sit as umpires whose judgment should be final. Now each player carved his men, his kings, queens, bishops, knights, castles, and pawns, with skill the like of which had not been seen before: for an eternity was given to each for his work. But when all was in readiness and the game should begin, none could be found wise enough for umpires: though not a few volunteered. And the players, for lack of better critics, were constrained to this strange agreement, that their own chessmen, whom they had fashioned, should be their judges.

For awhile the skill of the players seemed equal, and the game progressed in such profundity of thought and subtlety of invention that the chessmen, who, you must believe, were endowed with some understanding, were so amazed that they doubted whether they did not themselves initiate their excursions and bold doings. But before many æons had passed over this wonderful game, the play of the two master-craftsmen became strangely different. The skill of him who held the red men remained as it had begun. His men he could count upon to do as he bid them, and, in given circumstances, to act as they had done a thousand years before. His chessboard remained as fair and unsullied as when it had first left his workshop at the beginning; and his play was such good play that it could hardly be bettered.

The board was so bright in colour, sunny in light, pleasant to live upon, that the red chessmen desired none better, for they also remained, as they had begun, masterpieces of skill. And they knew that they were so.

But the player who owned the white men was different; and his work differed, though in high honour he still conformed with the rules each had agreed upon. As he watched the meek submission of his men and their obedience to his will, he, strange and purposeless though it appeared to his opponent, learned to love his poor carvings of ivory, and in so doing he came to desire something beyond the exercise of his own skill and personal power. He, foolishly, as was accounted by his opponent and indeed as appeared to all the red men as well as to many of his own, taught his people, kings with their queens, knights in

their castles, bishops ministering to pawns, to understand the game, so that they should choose their own moves. They should think out where their own safety lay, because their master had need of them ; they should look how best to serve those having need of their help, so that their master could not repent him of the freedom he had given ; and lastly, they should, in such service, attain a higher understanding to work in co-operation with himself, the designer of them and their laws. Thus should they deepen the intent of the game, and choose whether or no they would help their master to victory.

But, you must observe, there arrived an inevitable consequence, which had indeed been foreseen by the carver of his freed chessmen. Though they were still compelled to move within certain rules and limits

prescribed by the game, which rules and limits could not be transgressed without personal as well as social disaster, they yet had choice in their moves and their motives. And because many moved foolishly and many lazily, because some even chose to deny their obligation to obey the rules, disaster seemed to assail the game of that player who loved his men. And the men of both sides declared him to be weak in power and foolish in desire ; some even said that, had he loved his men as he pretended, he would have kept them rigidly tied to their obligations.

And the board of the white men grew strange in appearance and mightily unintelligible. The squares became blurred ; for the white-daisied meadows grew black with soot belched from the tall objects which the castles had become, and which the poor

pawns half worshipped as the emblems of success and progress. The shady woods were cut down that fuel might be found for the feeding of the chimneys and the fouling of the meadows. The rivers that marked out the squares on the land grew rank with horrors that, in fighting for life, had found only death; and the blue waters became red with the streams of greed and hatred that poured into them. How so? Because some of the pawns, if one among them seemed more favoured of their master, would hate, starve, and slay that fellow. Some kings, you must observe, grew tyrants, and sought to take freedom from any who questioned the regal right of exacting service. Some knights grew lazy because they, having turned their castles of strength into chimneys of commercial success, enticed the pawns to fuel their furnaces, and thus save themselves

from their birthright to work and be free. And some bishops, who claimed best to understand the will of the master, grew greedy also of power, and sought, like the kings, to rob the men of their freedom, and cast their minds, if not their bodies, in chains. They said, "The master may have given you freedom of conscience, but we must regulate it! He has certainly given you power of reason, but we must endorse it!" Yet, notwithstanding all this seeming disaster, the master worked on in the strength of his deep intent. "The game is not yet played!" he cried; "have we not a million years before us? If I can show one good pawn, bishop, or king who has justified the freedom I have given, he is worth more than all the automata; he justifies all my own disappointments, all the hard years of my labour."

But the master of the red men, the red men themselves, and indeed many of the white, railed at the good master of the white men because their whiteness was stained. They cried that, had he been omnipotent, he had saved his pawns from the tyrannies of those he had ordained for their guidance; that, had he been all-loving, he had never allowed them to grow greedy and lazy; that, had he been omniscient, he had endowed them with such wisdom as would have made them understand the folly of bartering the bread of life for the Dead-Sea apples of starvation.

And the white men grew stronger, more powerful, and regardless of that freedom which was responsible for their growth. Nay, they even denied its reality. They sold their bodies in slavery, for the sake of ease and unearned power, to a Mammon that gave them gold; they sold their minds

to spare them the labour of thought; they submitted to false churches that, distrusting their privileges, feared freedom because of its abuse in licence.

And there the fable ends.

Must I, in conventional manner, declare the moral? It is as brief as it is obvious. In the master of the white men, who soiled their gardens and sullied their pristine purity, is suggested the idea of a beneficent and omnipotent Creator; while in the maker of the red men is symbolized the sort of god whom the agnostic would have selected to obviate sin and suffering. And I have ended my fable at this point, for it merges into the actual story of human growth and human failure. And hardly, I think, were it worth while pursuing our search for the truth, whether in Nature, or in men's hearts, or in scriptures, but for one fact

in our history that has given us knowledge of the import of things. You know what this fact is—the coming among us of One whose personal life was inspired by law and revealed in beauty; whose social life was inspired by love of the children of men and revealed in sorrow because they rejected the truth; whose oneness with eternal Law transcending all mundane obligation was revealed in His sacrifice, and His going from those He loved, that they might grow and learn freedom in faith.

And now we profess devotion to Him and the truth with which He inspired men; and the fact, for all the poverty of its fruit, is declared in the churches and hospitals with which our cities abound. Yet, despite the money we give and the noble thoughts that inspire those who teach; despite the

great and small deeds in mercy of many who obey, most of us still maintain, tacitly or openly, that we cannot, in the strange necessities of this age, take the injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount quite literally. And why? Because we are afraid of taking in both hands and holding to our heart the priceless gift of freedom. As it appears to me, the more profoundly we study fact, and the more humbly we wait upon the ministrations of pure science, the more sure shall we be that the Sermon on the Mount proclaims the elemental law of life with its prospective, evolutional possibilities of eternal growth in ever increasing freedom.

I suspect that some of you men of science will think I am exceeding the province of my lecture in speaking in such manner; and I suspect also that some of you students of theology will feel that I should leave it

to others, more learned and more devout than myself, to speak of sacred things. But if we would be scientific and honest, we dare not disregard one item in man's nature or mode of life, whether we consider it as artificial, or fanciful, or as the result of his fears. All things and all appearances of things are facts; and, to the truly scientific, man's renunciation of self is as real a fact, though prompted by ideals, as his crimes, though accounted for by the faults of ancestry and environment.

Nor must the student of theology think that religion lies beyond the pale of the scientist's work. He who best trusts his religion will least resent its being studied with the scalpel, test-tube, and microscope of scientific precision. It is, I believe, by the scientific method that we shall serve best the philosophic understanding of the religious

sense; and, if by such method we find that all our inexplicable hopes take origin in the depths of an eternal and omnipresent Personality, our gain will not be the less real that its proof lies beyond the confines of our mere intellects. Yet I am not saying that it is necessary for all men to study these things in the scientific spirit. Some, I am prepared to believe, know without proof; some, we know, hope without adducing good reason. Such we need not seek to help, seeing that they may, notwithstanding their silence, have eyes of the eagle; while we who talk have perhaps but the atrophied eyes of the mole.

I have yet more to say about this freedom which I would have you understand is the final outcome of our perfecting in the religious sense. I want to give you a clue to its study in the history of our State and

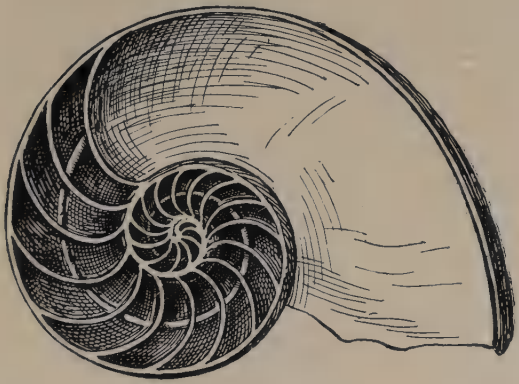
religion, these being, I maintain, inseparable in their growth. This clue will serve for the further strengthening of our belief that freedom is as essential in our religion as renunciation and service. At the same time, I shall, I hope, make you understand how distinct, in point of natural law, is freedom from licence, power from tyranny, charity from interested altruism, and pure egoism from self-seeking; and then I shall have done.

The growth of the spirit of freedom throughout the history of man is closely identified with the growth of power. Even the power of France after the Revolution was due rather to the freedom of the people than to the ambition of Napoleon. That the abuse of power is one of the dangers in freedom is no argument against the merit of freedom. To this I shall again refer.

I suspect, moreover, when the evolution theory comes to be studied with a fine philosophic spirit, imbued with the knowledge of these latter days, that the whole process of increasing excellence will be found to be inspired by one great principle, germinal in the beginning, fruit-bearing in its consummation; and that this great principle is the passionate spirit in all life, the irresistible, undeniable spirit, to free itself from the trammels of its environment, even though this environment were made by life for its own enlargement; even though, as the very measure of its success, life must make for itself new and larger environments for its labour, and must forge new chains to awaken new needs for the increase of freedom.

Growth itself may be defined as a discontent with existing conditions and a rising above them into larger opportunity.

PLATE VI.



SECTION OF THE PEARLY NAUTILUS

(*Nautilus pompilius*)

Conceive of growth or evolution in the light of a simple illustration. This pearly nautilus (Plate VI.), as you see, is a series of chambers strung together, as it were, by a narrow passage running through the centre of each, but otherwise entirely separate. The mollusc that built it occupied each successive chamber as it grew bigger, leaving the smaller and building the larger on the same plan, but with a larger sense of its possibilities. Keeping hold, with a strange affection for its bygone history, of the chambers it has left for ever, the mollusc, unknown to itself, constructs a beautiful whole—beautiful because, declaring in its symmetry and shape some law of spiral growth in evolution, it proclaims a deep truth, in the simplicity of which we and it hold fellowship.

But whether or no we regard evolution in life as a freeing from existing forces that

hinder at the same time that they awaken our ideals, the whole of our political and religious history in England is a story of evolution. And it is the same scheme of evolution as of old, though we study it in these latter days by the light of facts handed down to us by letter of pen, as distinguished from geological imprints on rocky pages. Our national story is the history of the assertion and evolution of our rights in that freedom for which we have been foremost among men in staking our lives.

If our few great men, rather than an innate spirit inspiring the people to progress, seem to have made our story, it is only so because they stand forth as the more potent expressions of the fire that is always burning, sometimes smouldering and sometimes aflame, in the community's depths. Thus Stephen Langton, first among the subscribing

witnesses of Magna Charta, proclaimed his belief in ideal and essential rights to freedom when he, with a boldness greater than can be realized by us who have done with papal assumption, refused to publish the excommunication of his colleagues. Great though were his life and service to Truth, he was but one bigger voice among the clamouring multitude who all believed in the principles for which he sacrificed his see rather than betray. Simon de Montfort, again, was spokesman among the barons because of his greater daring and stronger belief in their need to crush the tyrannies of the throne. But why? Because his sense of obligation to birthright was not content with smouldering, but must flame up in action. His contempt for the Pope and rapacities of the throne led to the means of our political freedom—those Houses of

Parliament which may yet justify our democracy when its evolution has outstepped greed and mundane expediencies.

Our political evolution is inseparable from our religious freedom; and I suspect it is with a deep sense of the essential fitness of this relation that we hold to the union of Church and State, though so often each seeks to support the other's edifice with mimic buttress, as if impelled by fear of a common danger in change and growth. Dangers there must be ever ahead of us if we be free men to carve our future, to work out our political and religious salvation. But the dangers will never be more than are profitable for us to contend with, and cannot be compared for a moment with the disasters attendant upon stagnation and quelling of the life that must be always agrowing if it would live.

Each step of advance in our growth has been a step onwards in emancipation; and because of the frequent, though, I think, but temporary, failure of our ideals, we need not doubt that the religious sense is inspiring us to this emancipation. Even in the Tudor days the increasing power of the throne was not incompatible with the growing freedom of mind, the strengthening of ideal, and the reality of the religious sense. In the Great Rebellion, again, the inherent union of this sense with the feeling after political freedom as a moral necessity, was hardly shaken by the tyrannies of an army, many of whose privates were real saints and generals true patriots; nor yet by the senseless restraints imposed by the shackles of Calvinism upon a people craving for freedom.

Again, in the days of the Restoration, when the religious sense slumbered and piety was

derided; when the people, longing once more for colour and gaiety, with liberty to choose and expand, turned from the deep inspiration of their fathers and accepted the licence of court negligence as the only desirable alternative—even then the spirit of freedom was still moving, in spite of political decay and fashionable immorality. As if the knowledge of man's obligation to assert his rights were a vital force that must have outlet, the spirit of freedom leapt into life and took form in scientific investigation. For although the Royal Society had first been inaugurated some fifteen years before the accession of Charles the Second, it was the black days of his shadow which granted its Charter (1660); and the intent of the early Fellows, as is the intent of those in our day, was the pursuit of knowledge after the methods of Francis

Bacon, "in a spirit admirably compounded," says Macaulay, "of audacity and sobriety."

And I maintain that, dark though those days were, the desire for freedom joined hands with the religious sense, and inspired the pure investigation of Nature, untrammelled by self-interest, money-making, or advantage to society. William Harvey's treatise on the circulation of the blood had indeed appeared some thirty years earlier, marking almost the first real step towards founding a science of physiology (1628); but it needed that common desire for knowledge which was awakened by Bacon's *Novum Organum*, rather than academic learning, to produce the handful of great men who were to little London in their day what her philosophers were to little Athens in the fifth century B.C.—in each

case sufficient to make great for all time the name of their country.

When I name Newton, first to unite high mathematics with experimental investigation; Edmund Halley and John Flamsteed, the astronomers; Robert Boyle, the father of modern chemistry and founder of the Boyle lectures; Sloane, the naturalist, and Wallis, the mathematician and founder of the Royal Society; when we see how prelates, jurists, statesmen, and princes vied with one another, not merely in patronizing science, but in taking active share in its pursuit, we find even those days of waning morality and abandoned democracy giving evidence of some truth in desire, and setting indeed a lesson to this age when science is pursued as a means of emolument, and preachers of religion await in fear the revelations of experimental research. Our science, I think, to attain the

highest, must be pure and freed from self-interest, no less than must our work for society and truth. And so far as the Royal Society began its work in this spirit, it served, I believe, even in those days, the religious sense which has never entirely slept even in our times of direst degradation.

But whatever movement we have ever made that has tended to progress—and by progress we as philosophers dare not think in the first place of riches or extent of domain—it has always come to us because some were found strong to dare all in the justification of their faith, and only because they felt within them that inherent need of serving their ideals. Even if we assert that some great movements were effected through the intensity of the egoistic sense of an individual—as, for instance, in Henry the Eighth—and that no spirit of idealism or

desire for social advance or hope for personal excellence inspired such a one to his course of action, I do not think it spoils my argument. For notwithstanding that king's self-serving and moral degradation, the spirit of virtuous, personal independence so typically English was strong within him. In daring to withstand the Pope, in daring to scoff at his excommunication, he but typified the spirit that was virile in our world; and for him, although a crowned head, to dare question the word of one who in the eyes of all Christendom was supreme to kings and emperors, was a noble act, despite its self-interest.

But the nobility of Henry lay in his egoistic strength of mind rather than in a spiritual force of soul. It could not be placed alongside the noble altruism of the great commoners of a century later, who taught the people that they must not

submit to the king's prerogatives when these necessitated wrongs to his people, nor accept his lies as privileged, and the shackling of their liberty as the will of God. Neither can Henry's boldness nor Hampden and Pym's devotion, great though their consequences have been in the making of our Church and State, rank with the starved Monk of Wittenberg's transcendentalism. Worn with self-tumult, fastings, and prayer, yet not the less loving life, peace, and the fairness of the earth, Luther stood alone before the Diet at Worms, with all the dazzling pomp of Christendom sitting in judgment of his heresies, and cried: "Unless I be convinced by Scripture and reason, I neither can nor dare retract anything; *for my conscience is a captive to God's word*"— a creed which then gave, and for all time has given, heart to Truth in her struggle

against the incrusting dogmas of scholasticism; against the worship of forms of religion, forms of learning, forms of science, which seek to proclaim their vitality in outward and visible show of ephemeral grandeur.

Believe me, the principles of protestantism are still strong within us, in our religion, our state, and our science; and they must be strong if we would grow as individuals or as a nation. And, believe me, the principles of democracy must as certainly be strong within us if our religious sense is to have freedom to grow. And when I say the *principles* of protestantism and democracy, I do not mean to offer one word or another concerning dogmas which may or may not be the outcome of these principles. I do not stand in criticism of the teachings of theology, nor do I pronounce opinion upon

this or that political measure or party. *The principles of anything are the germinal beginnings which gave rise to that thing and inspire it throughout the whole period of its vitality.* And the principles of protestantism are the principles of democracy; they are the freedom to be guided by the Law—freedom to do that to which all are inspired by the elemental and dominant force of life. The principle of life is freedom to grow in obedience. The principle of protestantism is the right of the individual to think in accordance with the light given his mind and his conscience, provided these stand disciplined in humility and reverential before the Law. The principle of democracy is the right of the individual to act as his sense of right instructs him, provided he looks upon charity as the beacon-light of conduct. Both protestantism and democracy

are incompatible with self-seeking or the lust of power or the craving for unearned riches. Both protestantism and democracy, I hold—and some at least among you will not dispute it—can exist in purity only when their meaning is defined in the words of the Sermon on the Mount, despite the arguments of the political economist as to the unpractical nature of its doctrines.

Protestantism and democracy, then, whether judged in the light of Christ's teachings or in the spirit of philosophic freedom, mean but one thing: *the eternal worth of the individual in the cosmic Law.* To hold that man's chief value lies in the fact that he is an item in the construction of a whole, be that whole a church or a state, is, if you allow the theory its logical conclusion, to justify clericalism on the one hand, socialism on the other; and both

represent the very antithesis of that individualism which I say is the basis of Christianity, the spirit of protestantism, the aim of democracy. The Church, you will surely admit, exists more for the sake of the individuals composing it than for glorifying God apart from their welfare; and the State stands mainly for the sake of justifying and encouraging the personal rights of its component members, however expedient it may appear to repress the starving and restrict the vicious that the mighty may sit comfortably in their seats. Conceive of the medical profession existing primarily for its colleges and hospitals and practitioners, rather than for its patients! or even for the understanding of disease rather than for the relief of suffering! Conceive of railways being justified in their dividends, rather than in the needs of those

who would travel! Both Church and State stand solely because of the needs of the failing and suffering; they are human institutions, and will prove the more truly so as their members obey their religious sense, and know both Church and State to be divine because inspired by the eternal Law.

Before I close I must gather some of my threads together, especially because, in speaking of freedom, I may appear to have wandered from my initial argument, and to have lost sight of the point I set out to prove—*viz.* that the religious sense is as much part of our inheritance as any other of our vital attributes.

It may appear to some that the very idea of freedom implies a sense inimical to that of obligation and obedience; you may say that our only thought, when we desire freedom, is to be quit of our obligations,

even if these be the exalted obligations of service, but especially if they necessitate renunciation of individual rights. But if you claim this, you are putting an interpretation upon the word *freedom* which is not sanctioned by reason. I conceive that in your sense of the word you would wish to be free to choose what you would have, uninfluenced by any impulsion or obligation from the outside: for to be impelled by any motive whatever is to be a slave to that motive. In other words, you would prefer to act without any definite purpose in view: for to have purpose would be, for you, to act under obligation to that purpose, which is the *reductio ad absurdum.* Not God Himself can act without the motive and obligation of His purpose; and therefore, according to your idea of freedom, no divine being, however omnipotent, could be really

free in action unless untrammelled by obligation and motive—unless, indeed, you can imagine a God who should create without any idea of what He was going to make!

No, the whole conception of freedom is opportunity to grow in obedience to the law of our highest nature, unhindered, except so far as hindrances that we can overcome will strengthen in us the power to grow. A man's freedom is shown not in carving out his own fancied idea of what is good for him, but in choosing which course he will pursue: the easy and slothful and parasitic, which will save him from the labour of obedience and that increase of obligation which work eternally brings; or the difficult, strenuous, and independent course, in the pursuit of which he attains freedom and power in an increasing conformity with the eternal Will.

The subject is vast, and I would willingly say much more upon it if time were at our disposal. Suffice it to say now that it needs no special pleading, casuistry, or philosophic apology to make the truth of it apparent; for everyone who seeks freedom knows that my words are true, and that the only way of obtaining freedom lies in strenuous obedience to the Law, whose purpose in us is the evolution of our growth. The Buddhist's conception of the ideal desired by one who sacrifices all earthly joy to the attainment of this ideal, is freedom; and, different though the Oriental passivity is from the Western activity in matters of life and religion, their ultimate ideals do not widely differ. In both, the service of others and the renunciation of self are the only possible stepping-stones to the attainment of that freedom which is but co-operation

with the Law that all Nature obeys, and which has, in its power of service, created all things.

Whatever system of philosophy we patronize or form of faith we embrace, as practical men and women with ideals transcending our personal success, we shall all admit that freedom can be reached only in the renunciation of self-seeking. Quite as surely, and judging in like spirit, we perceive that the only form of effective renunciation is that which is necessitated by service to our neighbour and the Law under which we serve. While we believe that the higher life is found only by losing the lower from which we arise, we must, I think, no less hold that the only asceticism consonant with the Law is that which is sought because a means to fruitful service, and not for its purposeless starving either of body or soul.

"And yet," you will say in a last desire to be absolutely truthful, "look what freedom brings in its train! Were it not better for us to be a socialistic community of bees, where all are equal, where rapacity and vice are made impossible by a rigid mechanical repression? What profits us our liberty when the fruit of its immediate germination is licence? What profits power when those who attain it degrade it into tyranny?"

These questions which you ask are but questions concerning our limitations and that extraordinary tendency in all life to pursue the easy way rather than the road leading upwards to excellence. The higher we ascend in our evolution, the greater is the demand upon us for growth; and, as the inevitable corollary of this truth, the greater is the fall if we lose hold of our ideal.

At each stage of our increasing freedom we acquire an increase in power of choice; for we are learning to take share in the eternal purpose. The greater our freedom the greater our power—for good or for evil. The higher we have reached in width of life, and the greater our attainment of intellectual and ethical riches, the greater the possibility in us of using that power well or ill.

And if we use our gifts ill, the greater they be, the deeper will be the prostitution of our ideal. If obedience to physiological needs is degraded, the worship of self is instituted and the dignity of the individual is shamed. If obedience to that instinctive social sense which is something akin to love is admitted for the sake of the comfort and peace it brings, and not from an inherent desire for neighbourly service, it becomes

mechanical and unevolutional; and the progress of the Law is arrested. If the freedom our ancestors have won for us over tyrants, ignorance and vice is utilized for the sake of the power it has given us to tyrannize and dogmatize, or to justify our vices as natural law, then is Freedom prostituted into licence, and her devotees, once strong in the strength which comes of freedom earned in obedience to a just master, become slaves to the tyrant No-law.

And yet another last word I would say to you students—and God help us who would teach if we be not also students among you!—do not let us think that evolution is consummated in our own persons or our society; do not let us imagine that political freedom is yet won; do not let us think the Law has set limitations upon the work it would accomplish; do not let us drift into

philosophical contentment with our world, and think that things, dogmas and limitations must be accepted merely because they have stood the test of time, or because we do not see how they can be bettered. We must still be protestants if we would grow; and, alas! we must still make blunders and amend them if we would learn. There are still as many and as mighty lies besetting us as were ever slain by the prophets. And if our protestantism is strong within us, if it lives in virtue of our earning freedom in an increase of service, we need not fear our evolution.

As our password into the realms of knowledge, as our beacon amidst the dark paths of conflicting obligations, as our sword in the struggles with material needs and temptations, we may hold in our hearts that saying of Martin Luther through which

must come freedom to churches, states, and schools: "My conscience is a captive to God's word."

FINIS.

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By the Same Author

THE TREE IN THE MIDST

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